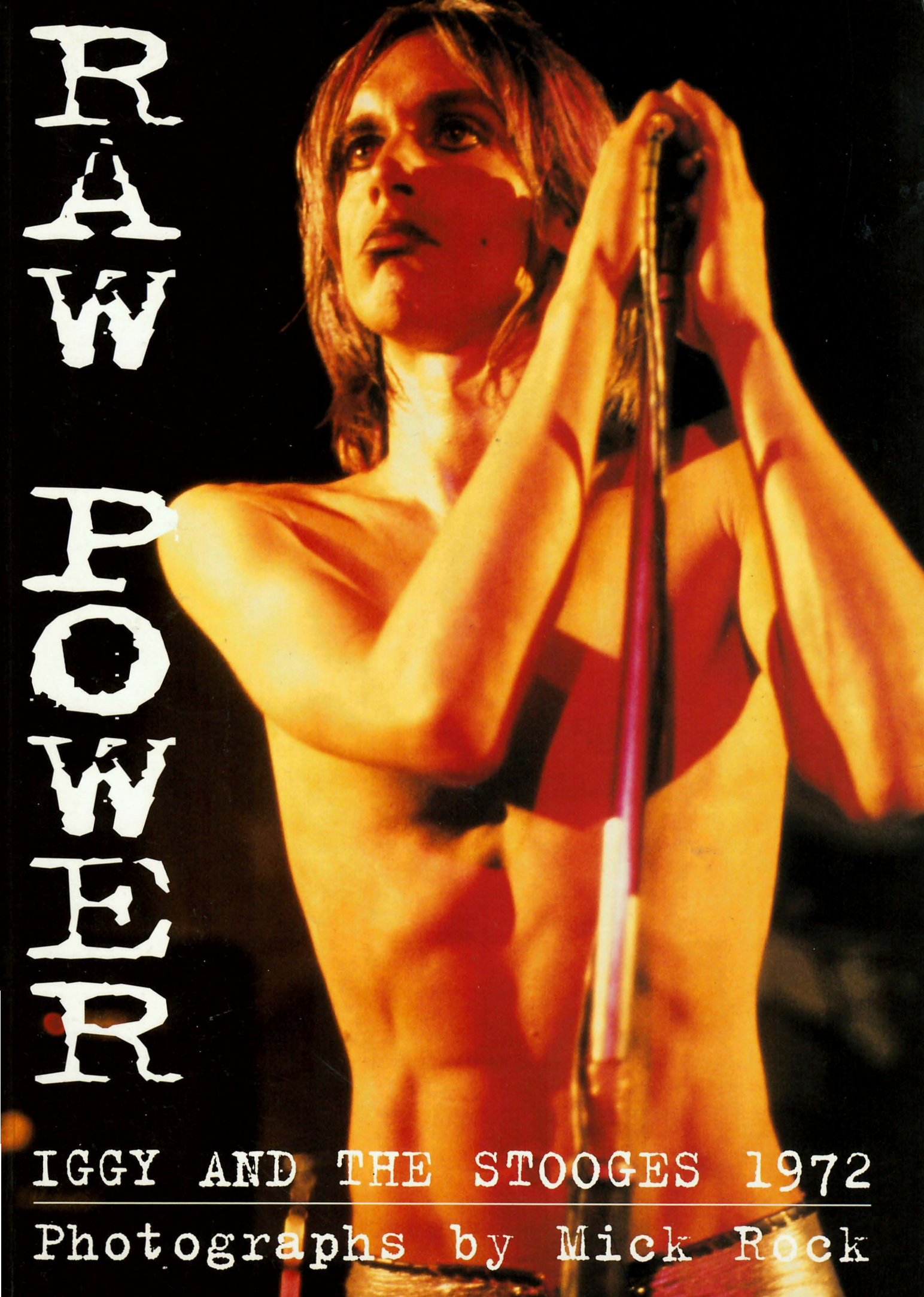
RAW POWER



IGGY AND THE STOOGES 1972

Photographs by Mick Rock

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PHOTOGRAPHER'S DEDICATION

This one's for Nathalie
Long may her power roar

INTRODUCTION

by Mick Rock

Twenty-eight years is a long time. It's not always easy to go back. But 1972 was a potent year for rock n' roll, for London, and for me. I saw (and photographed), the rise of Ziggy Stardust, Mott the Hoople's All the Young Dudes, the surfacing of Lou Reed with the Bowie/ Mick Ronson produced *Transformer* (and its key cut Walk on the Wild Side), and *Raw Power* (which wasn't released until 1973, but was recorded, mixed and photographed in 1972). I don't recall it like it was yesterday, but I do recall certain shiny moments in a year that transformed all our lives.

Iggy & the Stooges...Now therein lies a tale or two or three. Genius comes in strange packages. I knew that the Punkmeister had it the first time I heard the immortal couplet:

"1969 OK
All across the USA"

Such resonance in such minimal form; fuck, I knew this guy was a pure poet.

David Bowie introduced me to Jim Osterberg at a welcome party he had organised for Jim's first UK visit at some little veggie restaurant off Westbourne Grove, where everyone sat on the floor, in the early summer of 1972.

David had often riffed enthusiastically to me about the Ig, who in many ways was the inspiration for (Z)iggy Stardust. He swapped tales of Iggy for stories of Syd Barrett, an intimate of mine.

The very informed (and very hip) of London at that time had heard apocalyptic stories of peanut butter, broken glass and blood, and I maybe expected someone of an outrageous, outgoing nature, so I was struck by how quiet, polite, almost shy, Jim was.

Shortly after, I bore witness to the other side of this unique coin at a concert at the recently converted La Scala cinema in King's Cross, the Stooges' one and only show ever in the UK. Even the early albums and the tales of gore hadn't prepared me (or any of us). Remember this was 1972 (although the Stooges in some form had been on and off the game since 1967). A rock 'n' roll lifetime before the advent of the Sex Pistols and 'Punk Rock'. For a London lad this was an unprecedented experience.

Here was a 'monster' in the Shakespearian sense, elemental, a force of nature. To quote myself (see 'Mick Rock – A Photographic Record 1969–1980'): 'He was like something caged and very angry about it. Something dreamed up by Karl Jung...Dionysius in silver, breaking out...'

I remember feeling distinctly intimidated, even as I boldly aimed my lens at him. He appeared so much bigger in the frame than I knew him to be. He had undergone a complete and dangerous transformation, and I was totally fascinated. Little did I comprehend how great a resonance the images I was collecting would have. How could any of us have known the legendary status this concert would attain.

It seemed to last a lifetime (although it was in fact only 40 minutes) and it changed everything. There was no blood and broken glass, but we were all riveted and devastated by the ritual enacted before us. Never was there a truer description – 'Raw Power'! The stuff of narcotics and nightmares...

A couple of weeks later Iggy's manager Tony Defries (also Bowie's manager) called me. Two or three publications needed recent Stooges pics en groupe and there were none. It wasn't a commission (nor was the King's Cross session). Tony didn't believe in paying for photographs. But he understood my enthusiasm and my naivete, and knew that I would jump at the opportunity (which I did). In those days I came very cheap (I even paid all expenses). In truth, nobody valued rock photography very highly at the time. But I didn't care. I got my kicks out of aiming my lens; everything else was unimportant and my material needs were modest.

I had one camera and two lenses (a normal and a wide angle) and my red sneakers, and I was flying. It took me a while to locate the trashed out basement rehearsal studio off the Fulham Road, but I was buzzed. I had tracked the Stooges to their lair, and they were to be mine for a whole hour! There was no brief. There never was in those days. Just grab a fistful of frames and get out. But it was my nature to linger and probe around, to cram as much variety as I could into a few modest rolls of film. And in fact, the Stooges were glad to see me. They were bored with rehearsing for the upcoming 'Raw Power'

recording sessions, and I provided respite and distraction. It wasn't as if they were inundated by attention, or local photographers kicking down the door desperate to immortalise them! Those were very different times and there were few shutterbugs on the music scene. I was the only one who shot them on their 'Raw Power' jaunt.

First I recorded the Stooges as a group, then later individually (which, of course, meant mostly Iggy). They were very co-operative, and I remember it was Iggy's idea to be shot embracing the toilet bowl! Iggy and Ron Asheton were communicative although James Williamson was the most voluble, while Scott Asheton hardly mumbled a note. I remember James explaining to me that the Stooges' attention could wander easily, and not linger too long with one set-up: a hint I readily took. Certainly the location and circumstances were ideal for the Stooges. I worked with the available light (3 or 4 bare light bulbs hanging from the ceiling) and a long exposure or a small flash on the camera. 'Raw' was what we got and it was of course perfect. As I always did in those early years, I processed all the black and white photos myself. Some of the negatives are even somewhat fogged. Who knows why, but that only seems to add to the overall flavour.

A key point to note is that none of these photos (King's Cross or the basement) were shot with an album package in mind, and of course the Stooges hadn't even begun to record. The decision to use them came a few months later in New York where I was lensing Ziggy Stardust's first US tour, when CBS decided they wanted Bowie to remix the album and to release it in early 1973. Since these were the only recent photos available, out of necessity they made the grade. In their largesse, CBS even paid me a couple of hundred dollars! And I'm sure I was grateful for the pittance! It was great to be young and not give a damn about such trivial matters as geld. The beauty of it all is that as copyright owner of these images which have become an indelible part of rock 'n roll lore, my naivete has been rewarded many times over in the years in-between. Time and again life has proven itself to be wild and unpredictable, I'm grateful to say. My advice to young photographers: Hang on to your copyrights.

So there I was backstage at Manhattan's Irving Plaza one Friday night. Appropriately enough it was November 5th 1999, the last Guy Fawkes night of the Millennium. I had come to pay my respects after a quintessential Iggy Pop concert along with several other perennial downtown Iggy fans and allies, Danny Fields, Jim Jarmusch, Joey Ramone and Bob Gruen, when it occurred to me (not for the first time) that Ig/Jim was some kind of walking miracle. Not just as a great artist, but also as a human being of indelible character. Somebody up there (or down there) must have gotten their wires totally fucked, for this true original, this key gentleman of the rock 'n roll realm, should have been nailed in a wooden box or cast to the wind decades ago. But there he was once again, larger than life and at least twice as fabulous, defying all the odds. The great Gods of self-destruction have been salivating over him forever, but the Igman rocks on. His is a wonderful myth of burn-out, rejection and redemption enacted in a classic, almost Greek, mould...Heavy thoughts for a Friday night in Gomorrah.

It's been a privilege and a pleasure and I'm glad I've got the pics to bear witness. May your raw power pump forever, Igmeister. Thanks for the magic.

New York City, December 1999

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THE PRIVATE WORLD OF IGGY POP

Written by Mick Rock

Summer 1972

DEATH TRIP

Iggy Pop is, you might say, extreme. He makes the Mick Jaggers and Alice Coopers of this world look kind of timid. Words such as "spontaneous" and "unpredictable", frequently applied to him, are a little short on power. Iggy is a monster.

Rock magazines have spewed out reams of literature dedicated to the propagation of the Iggy legend. 'Yes,' he modestly admits, 'I'm a legendary figure, I am, strangely enough.' He's never cared much for what's been written about him, but he likes the fact that it's been written. 'I like being news.' He likes to shock although that's only a side product of what his trip is about.

Iggy's exploits are not for the delectation of the faint-hearted. He has trodden where no one else has yet dared. Tales of gore, of ripping flesh, crushed bones, shattered teeth, of hot wax poured over naked torsos, of frothing obscenities, of dark insanities enacted to the bloodthirsty whelps and gurgles of a voice which sounds as if it's just crawled out of the primordial slime... All this and Iggy says, 'I consider my music very understated. I only really just hint around the edges of what I'm into.' Now supposing he got just a little carried away one night...?

GIMME DANGER

'People hear about all these things I've done; they get the wrong impression.' Why, aren't they true? 'Sure they're true. It's just things I get into from time to time. It's like you're around for a while and things happen. I smash my mouth a little on a mike, get a little knocked about by the audience, people think it happens all the time.' One night, stone-drunk, he vomited all over the first couple of rows at Ungarno's Club in New York. One of his favourite antics is to leap off the stage into the crowd, and thrash about like a landed fish, daring them to, well, do things to him. Some American audiences don't need much encouragement. There was the time some of this activity got shown on the TV. 'I was held down, while one chick was pullin' off my pants, some others were tryin' to French kiss me. And this other one gave me a blow job. All the while I'd be kickin' one, hittin' another. I like to fight chicks off. It turns me on. I like violence. Strange chicks... Although I'm not really very violent.' And it may be true; off stage it's amazing to realise just how small Iggy is. In performance, he projects a gargantuan persona, doing back bends and somersaults and assorted bodily contortions of a kind which would stir even an advanced yogi from a trance. 'I'm jus' doin' my part.' He struts about with an aura of total arrogance and defiance when on stage. 'But how do I know what I look like? I look at photos, sure, but it never looks like me. I just like to be up there. I like bein' on stage. It's the only time I feel really calm, nice. I jus' gotten used to havin' my own way.' For years he's done pretty much what he wanted to, on and off stage. 'It gets hard to change. You get used to not bein' a nice guy.' He has a very existential attitude towards his audience: he's not about to play the modern bourgeois popstar for them. 'I jus' got this band and if anyone wants to see it, they can pay and get in and I'm tryin' hard to do a good show. I'm givin' it everything I've got.' And that would be hard to deny. 'But I ain't gonna be patronising,' he snarls, 'I'm sick of all this crap about ovations, and how many encores. I tell ya, when I'm into a band, I can't even take time out to clap.'

SEARCH AND DESTROY

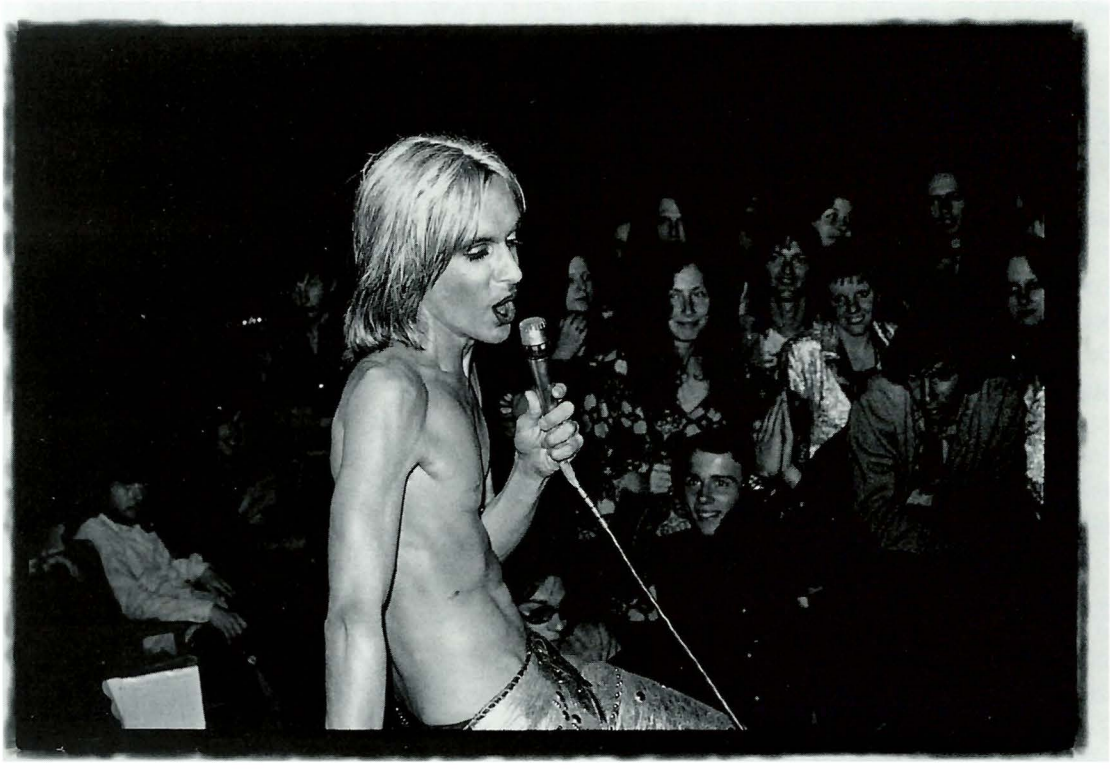
When I saw him recently in London at The Scala in Kings Cross, he spent some time wandering round the audience talking about wanting to find something 'interestin'. 'That's all it was. I wasn't trying to stir anyone. When I play in San Francisco, you got guys lookin' like the three wise men and chicks with bananas in their hair... I'm interested in interestin' things,' which is quite understandable, though one

feels that Iggy's version of what is "interestin"' may be more esoteric than he's letting on. 'I'm there doin' what I do, and they can do what they want. I'm not tryin' to hassle anyone. I'm there for their benefit and they're there for mine. What they think of me is their own business. Y'see the audience are my tool. It's interestin' to play for an audience, it really is.' It's certainly interesting when Iggy's doing the playing.

RAW POWER

Iggy's band is called the Stooges. It started off as the Psychedelic Stooges. Something about an acid trip and an old film of the Three Stooges. Elektra Records made them crop the psychedelic part for their first album. Some silly notion of it being too provocative.

The integral part of the early history of the group is that until Iggy took up with them, they had virtually no musical knowledge at all. He had to teach the three founder-members, two of whom are still with him, the fundamentals of the rock music trade. This probably accounts for the primitive quality, the naive effects of the raw electricity with which they support Iggy's exploits. How does Iggy see the total quality of Stooge music? 'I dunno. It's my style of music. It's so far out into its own field, that I don' even want to explain it. It's gone beyond the point where I can communicate it on a verbal level.' And it's true. There's a lot of futile intellectualising about what Iggy's into, but all the high blown and colourful language can never communicate the sheer gut appeal of what the Stooges put over. The Asheton brothers, Ron on bass and Scott on drums, and James Williamson, with his passive wax-doll look, on lead guitar, are perfect foils, musically and visually for their leader. 'All I can say is that there's a helluva lot of emotion and class.' If you really tie him down, Iggy might just squeeze out a few adjectives on the subject. 'It's a moody, thunderous, ominous, dreamy , kinetic – depending on the people playin' it at the time. It's not a bit contrived or derivative.' Contrived it ain't. Maybe there's some sense of a blues tradition somewhere behind it, but the element of sheer, stark confrontation takes us way beyond the usual rock roots. 'It's mainly something I just want to dig. If I wanted to go out and play rock 'n roll I could sell a lot of records – but what the hell!' To Iggy it's a whole way of life. He's never known any other since he left school. 'I jus' kind of fell into it. I don't know any other, so I jus' kind of go along with it.' The lyrics have their own special force. Sexual, you might say. Classic album cuts, such as 'Loose', give the prototype Stooge mood: 'I stick it deep inside/ Stick it deep inside.' Iggy looks blankly around, as if I've just revealed a whole new angle on his music. 'I guess it's totally sexual music. But I don't ever really think about it; it just turns me on.' Recent, as yet unrecorded titles include 'Penetration' and 'I'm Hungry'.



PENETRATION

Strange to relate, Iggy says he doesn't have a very strong sex drive. 'I'm really supershy about chicks. For so many years back home I had so many; I kind of O.D'ed. Now I'm really skittish. Now I tend to take the more passive role with a chick. Actually I'm very sensual. But I've just gotten so far out along those lines that my demands are extremely, ridiculously high. It got so's I'd always be bringing chicks home after gigs, then I'd have to tell them to get out. When you have sex with all these strange chicks in the audience while performing it kind of spoils you for any other situation.' It's hard to accept that he's really shy. 'I'm not shy in some ways. I'm shy in a really weird way.' He doesn't like people all that much; the only ones he likes to spend a lot of time with are young girls, fourteen and fifteen years old. That information is enough to make a poor suburban mother's heart quake, 'cause Iggy ain't exactly in the 'boy next door' bag. 'I only know one, must of called me a hundred times on the phone since I've been here. Two or three times a week. I never met her. Keeps callin' me. Anytime of the day or night. Might be four or eight in the mornin'. She won't give up. Jus' keeps ringin' and ringin' till you answer the phone. She's ok. Just wants to talk. About what I do, and what I like. Never anything special. Finally I asked her over. We were all dyin' of curiosity but she never showed. Today she told me she's movin' to London. Gonna have a big party and invite us all to it.'

I NEED SOMEBODY

He spends most of his time on his own, when he's not working with the band. He sleeps a lot. Often he won't answer the door to visitors. 'I have a kind of reclusive personality.' This idea doesn't fit in too well with his public image. 'No, well, of necessity when I do time around people I get it in big doses. It's not that I don't like knowin' people. I jus' don' like them getting too intimate.' Iggy has known more audience familiarity than any other stage performer, past or present. And it can't be said that he doesn't encourage it.

Iggy acquired his notable identity tag when playing with a small town Michigan band called the Iguanas. Iggy is a diminutive of Iguana, in case you hadn't registered. For a time he was Iggy Stooge. Now he prefers Iggy Pop. Pop is an adaptation of Popp, the surname of an old friend of his. He no longer answers to the name he was born with – he left that skin behind him long ago. 'Pop is my real name now. The other is my parents'. I don't like all this confusion about names. I like Iggy Pop. It suits me.' Iggy Pop is Iggy Pop and that's final.

His recent London performance was his first public appearance in eighteen months. There was a very good reason for this lay off. 'I was pretty sick. I've been comin' off a year of drug addiction. Very heavily into it. It ain't easy comin' off.' He's completely clean now. Understandably not the kind of man to have much faith in institutions, he didn't go to any clinic for help. He got himself off. 'It's hard to explain how I got into it. But I wouldn't recommend it.' That's what mainly brought him to England. After he'd got himself over the worst stage of withdrawal, he decided he wanted to stay away from his old haunts while he got himself together again. But he wants to go back as soon as he feels ready. 'England's very different to what I'm used to, very slowed down. I'm super-homesick for New York, Miami, or even Detroit. Y'know, the ocean, goin' to a movie late at night. It's not jus' cars and stuff, it's the feel. The feel over here's real weird. It's sort of a matter of what you're used to.' And what Iggy's used to is a far cry from the quiet respectable little street in South Kensington he's been domiciled in for the last six months. Not that he's down on London. He had a good time at the gig...

YOUR PRETTY FACE IS GOING TO HELL

The time out hasn't sapped any of his confidence. He explodes like some space age lion onto the largely unsuspecting audience. I mean, reading about Iggy's one thing, seeing him in the flesh is, well, frightening almost. You get the feeling that with him there are no limits – it'll all go just as far as the mood takes him. Nothing is preconceived – except his dress. Storming onto stage like some skinny freaked-out clockwork doll, arms and legs flailing about as if they had nothing to do with the rest of him, he is dressed only in silver lamé, studded trousers, worn as tight as a second skin, and black pointed boots – now there's something for the sentimentalists. His hair is sprayed silver, and thick black makeup encircles his manically glowing eyes. He shakes and rages and falls and crawls and slithers and moans, gurgles, growls, curses, while behind him his band stonily launch their electric gut-assault on the startled freaks who've come to find out... It's so frontal, so basic, that everyone is rigid.

You can't really dance to the Stooges, you just get kind of blown over by them. After lurching and prowling and stumbling over every inch of the stage in the first two numbers, Iggy decides to explore the darkness beyond. He prowls and peers, followed where possible by spotlight, stopping sometimes to stare deep into people's eyes, maybe to drop into some guy's lap and put his arm around him. At one point, he seizes a girl by the hair. She makes no protest; just gazes wide-eyed at her assailant. 'I've been hurt but I don't care/I bin dirt but I don't care.' He's dirt, and he don't care, and no mistake. To Iggy, 'People are jus' livin' entertainment. I never stop to think what it's all about.' And he has fun; his way. Those more practised in the art of Iggy-watching tell me that this night is a particularly subdued one by his own psychotically wild standards. There's no blood or vomit. It's kind of like a work-out; just feeling his way back into the old rhythm. Iggy himself enjoyed it in its own way. 'Yeah. Pretty cool. That was one sort of audience. They seemed a bit older. I'd like to sample a real teen audience. I saw a lotta nice girls in the audience. I see beautiful chicks walkin' aroun' London, but I never seem to meet any.' Maybe it's like he said: He's got very high standards.

SHAKE APPEAL

This applies also to his musical taste. 'I like the Stones. An' I craved the Doors at one time. Morrison. A big influence. I like lots of pieces of ethnic music. But there's really little that's bein' made now that I really dig. Ninety per cent of it is just a bunch of fake shit.' He'd like to make a hit record — but there's only one way he can do it and that's his way. Iggy's an original. He's not a man to try and satisfy popular taste. 'Fuck that.' He's shortly going to record his next album. 'I'd kinda like to do a tour of England after it. Break it open, have people get to know us a bit more. But I'm not doin' nothin' till the album gets done.'

He doesn't want to talk about it yet. It'll kind of happen how it happens, when it happens. 'There's nothin' to tell, really. Just listen to the music. Y'see, I'm not into anythin' really. Let's put it like this. What I'm into I'd never tell. I'd never tell my real feelings about people, things, situations. Fuck no. That's my business. No way. I'm really a very private kind of guy.'

MICK ROCK: BIOGRAPHY 2000

London-born Michael Rock studied modern languages at Cambridge University. Graduating in the late sixties with a fascination for faces and rock 'n' roll, his earliest 'key' subject was Pink Floyd founder and cult rocker Syd Barrett.

In early 1972, he met David Bowie just before he took the rock world by storm with his Ziggy Stardust persona. Mick became his 'official' photographer and soon became the favourite lensman of Lou Reed, Iggy Pop, Queen, and London's burgeoning 'Glam' scene. His *Transformer*, *Raw Power* and *Queen II* (duplicated in the Bohemian Rhapsody video) album covers are icons of the seventies. Later he became one of the leading photographers of the punk scene when he moved to New York in the late seventies, working with seminal punk performers Blondie, the Ramones, Dead Boys, and Talking Heads, etc. His photo of Johnny Rotten became the Sex Pistols first national US magazine cover.

He is a three-time Grammy nominee for album cover photography. He is an award winning Art Director of CD box sets for Aerosmith, Phil Spector and the Rolling Stones. Billboard Magazine dubbed him a 'music video pioneer' for his early work with David Bowie, Wings, and the Kinks. His work, especially with Bowie's Life on Mars, Jean Genie, and Space Oddity are embraced as classics of the form.

His iconic rock images, along with his more recent photo collage art and erotica have been exhibited in galleries in London, New York, Washington D.C., and Los Angeles. He is currently planning major one-man exhibitions in London, Tokyo and San Francisco.

In 1972 he wrote: 'I am not in the business of documenting or revealing personalities. I am in the business of freezing shadows and bottling auras.' His enthusiasm for rock 'n' roll imagery remains undimmed as he continues to photograph into the new Millennium.

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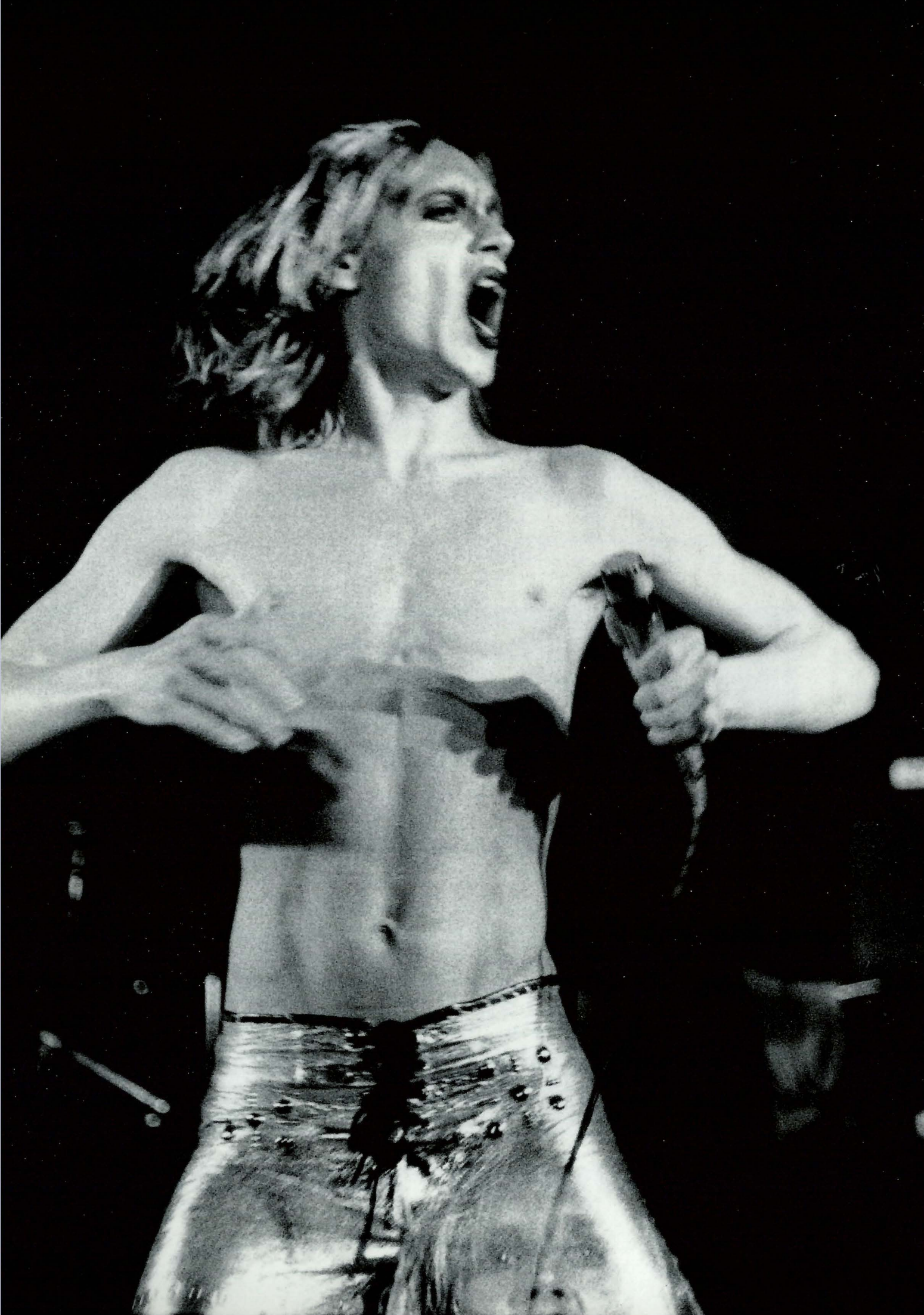
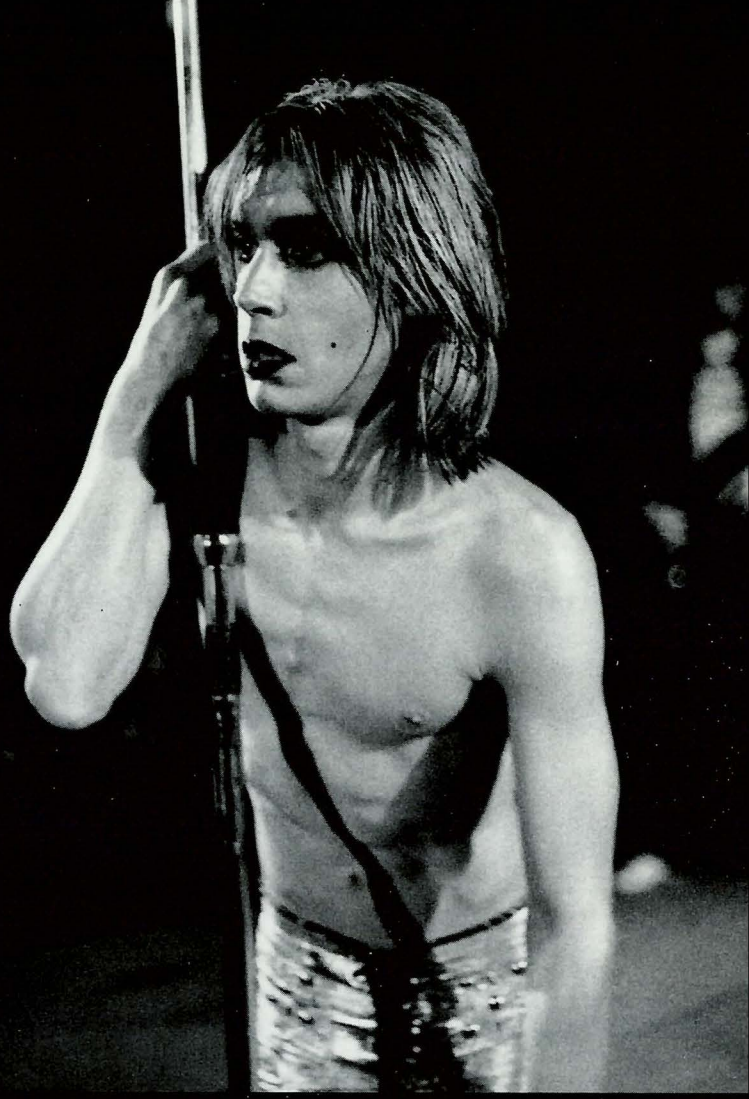
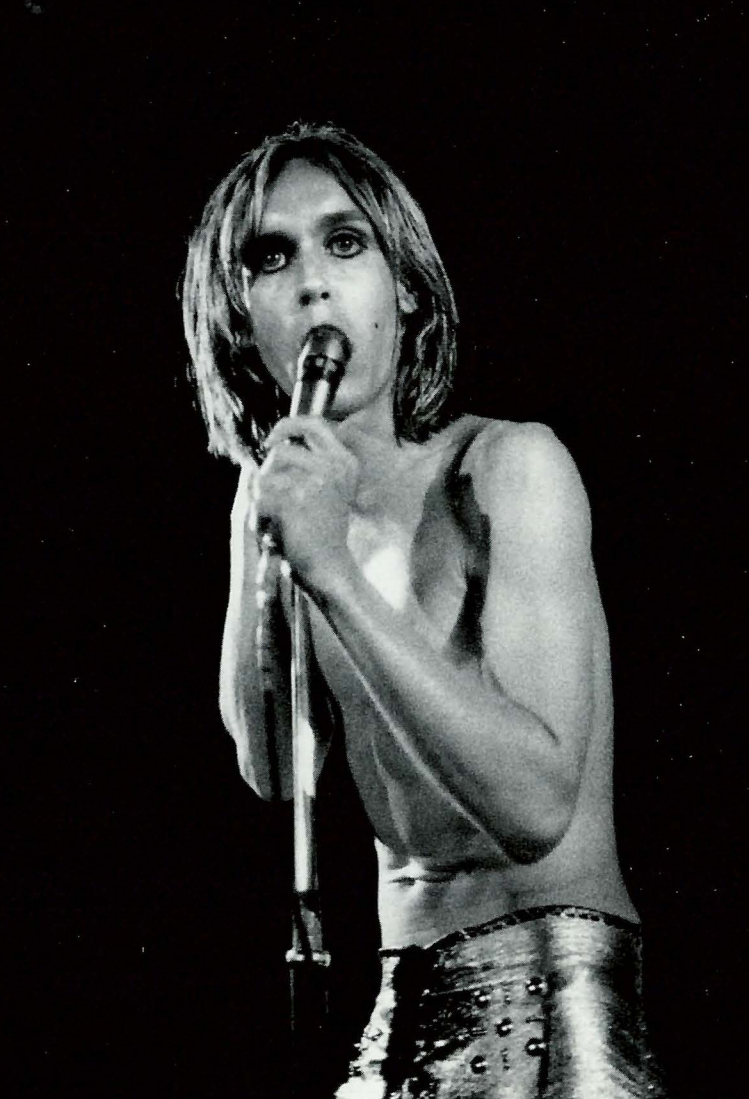
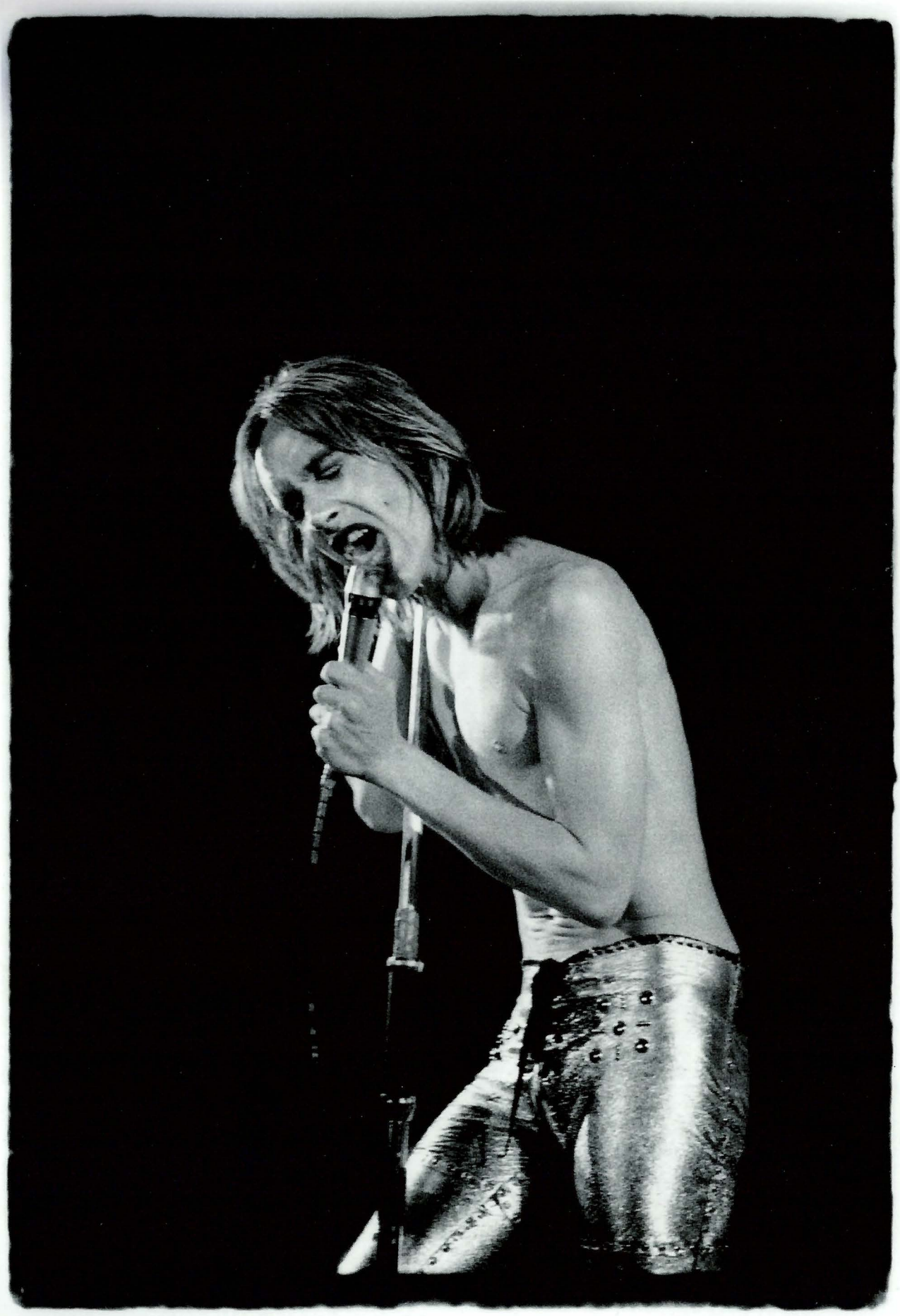
"Mick Rock is one crazy photographer"

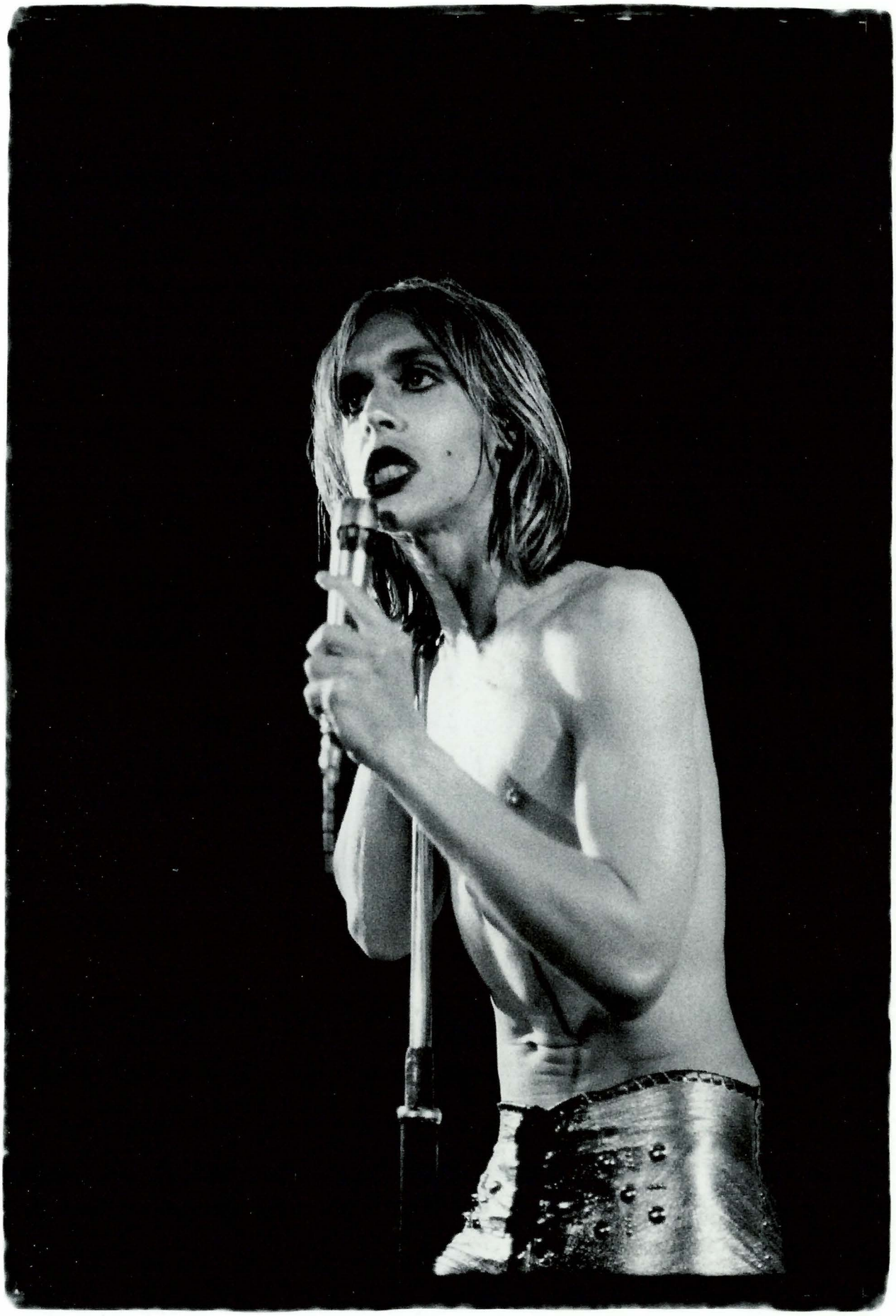
– Iggy Pop

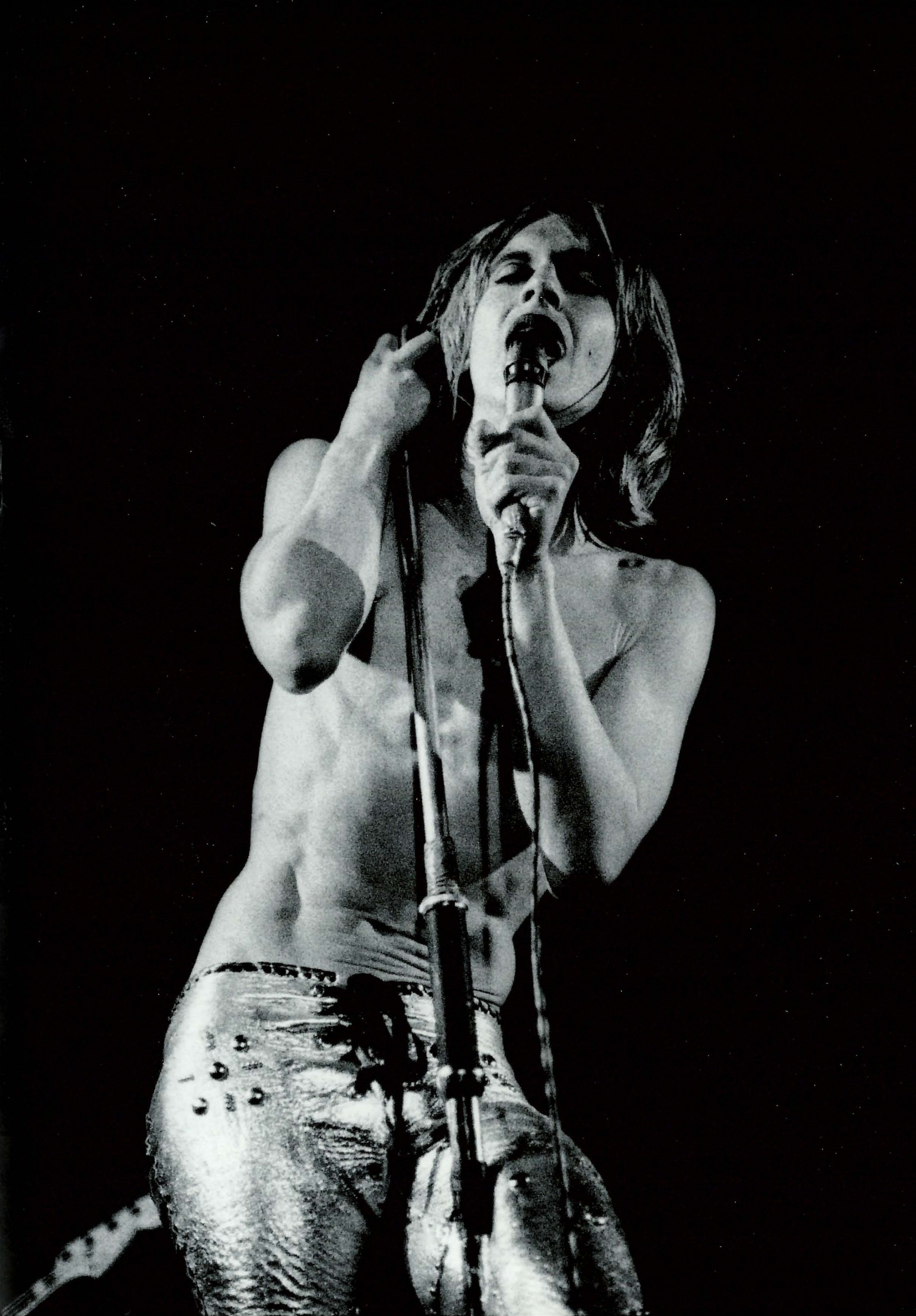


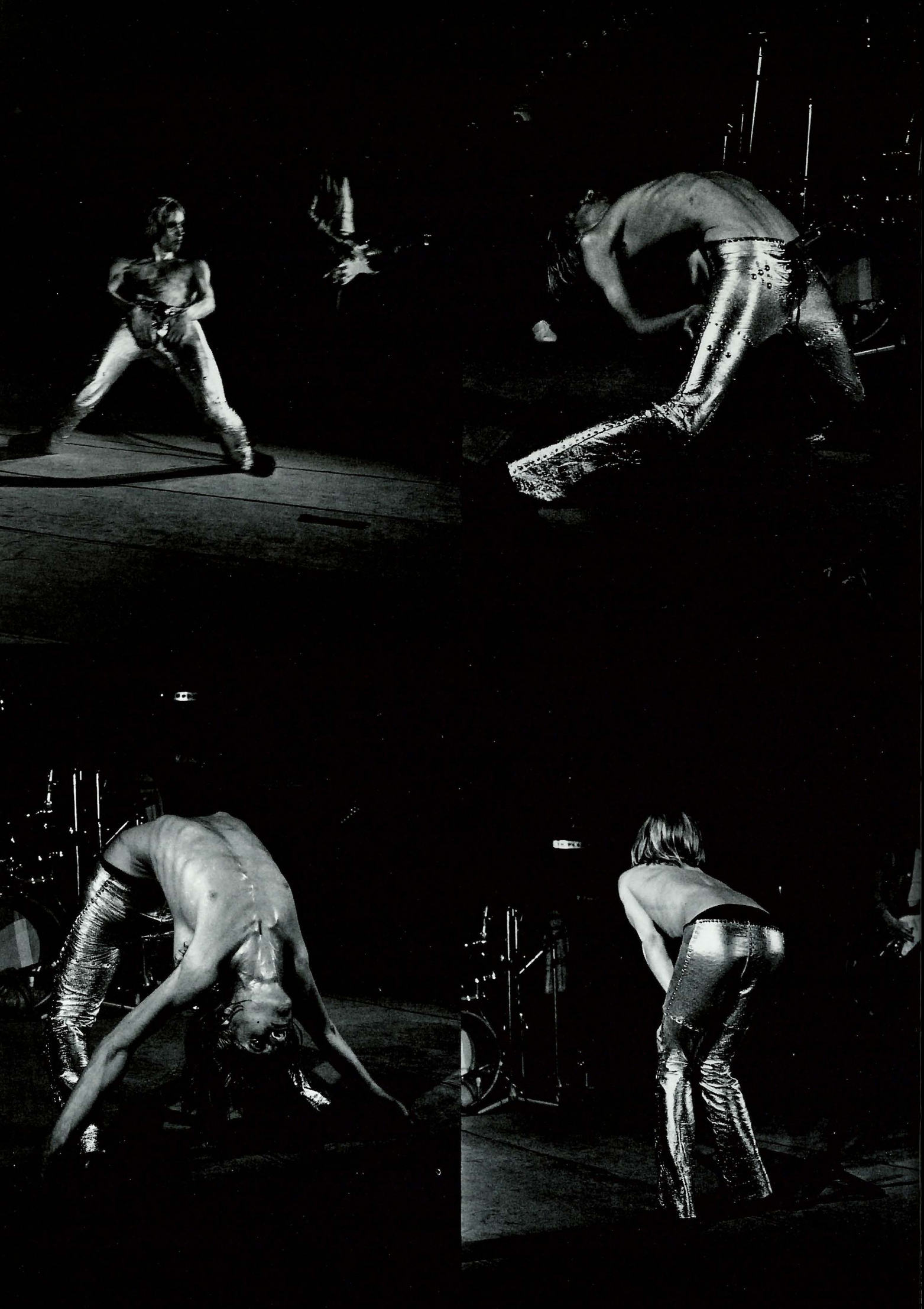


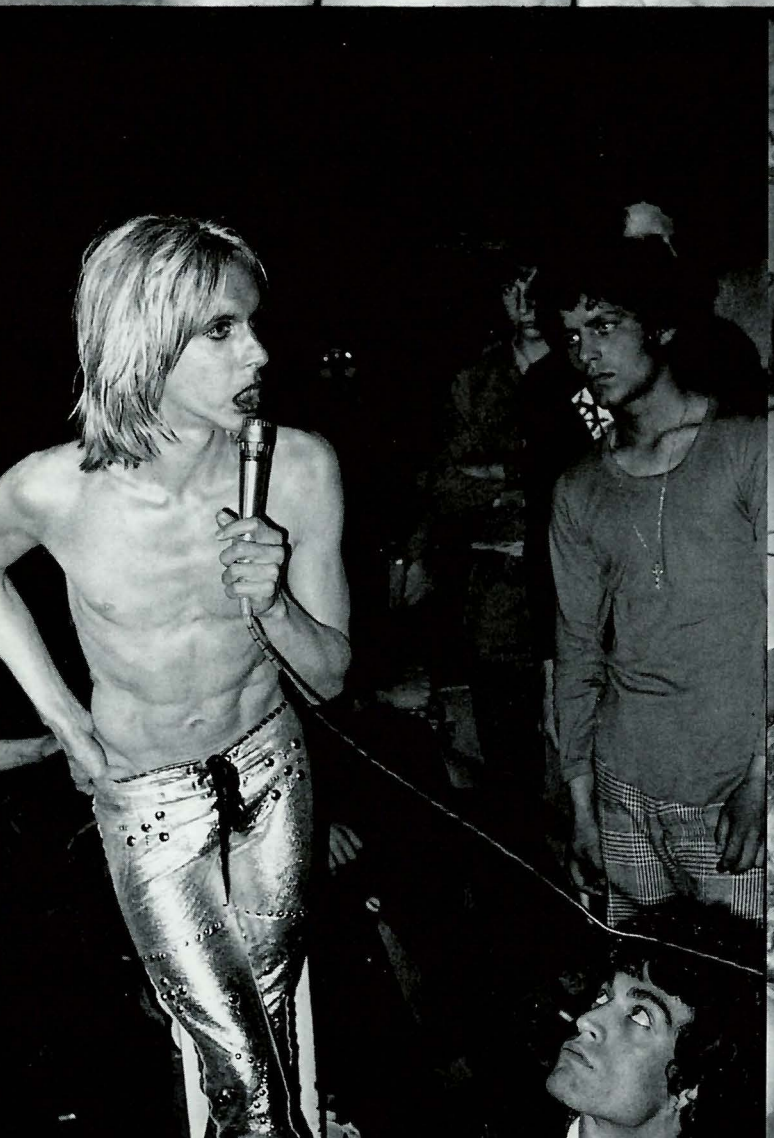


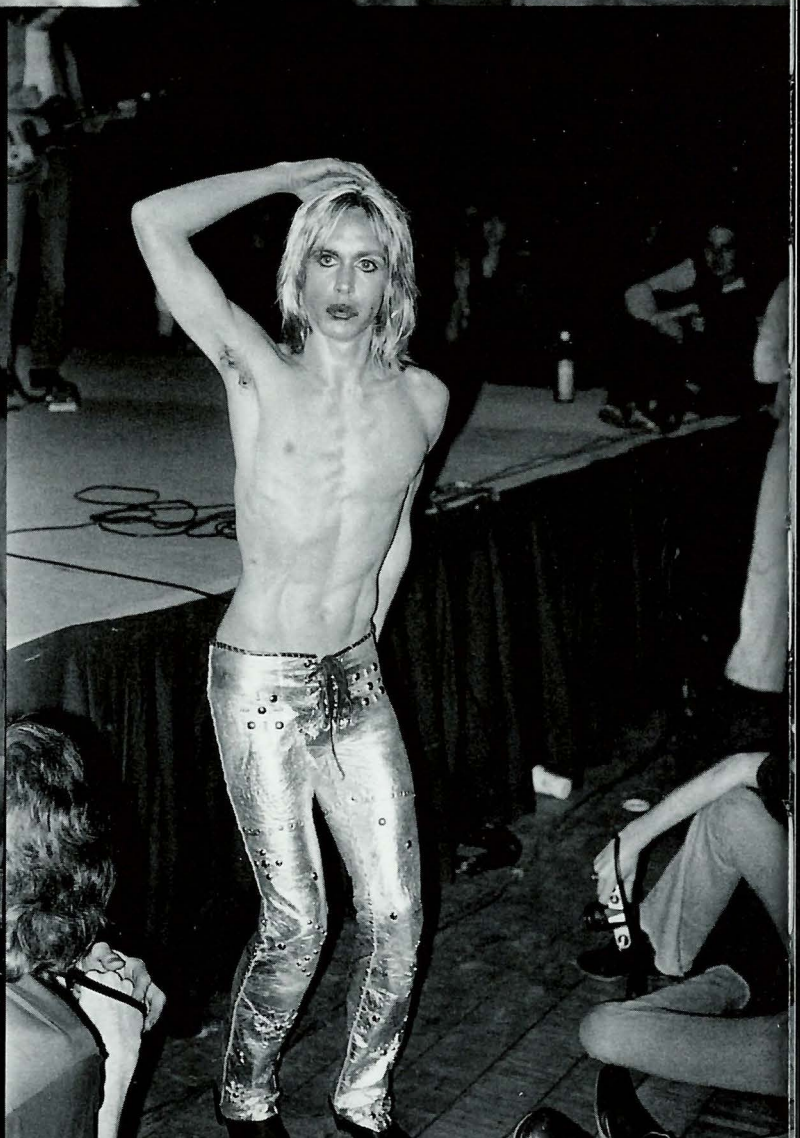


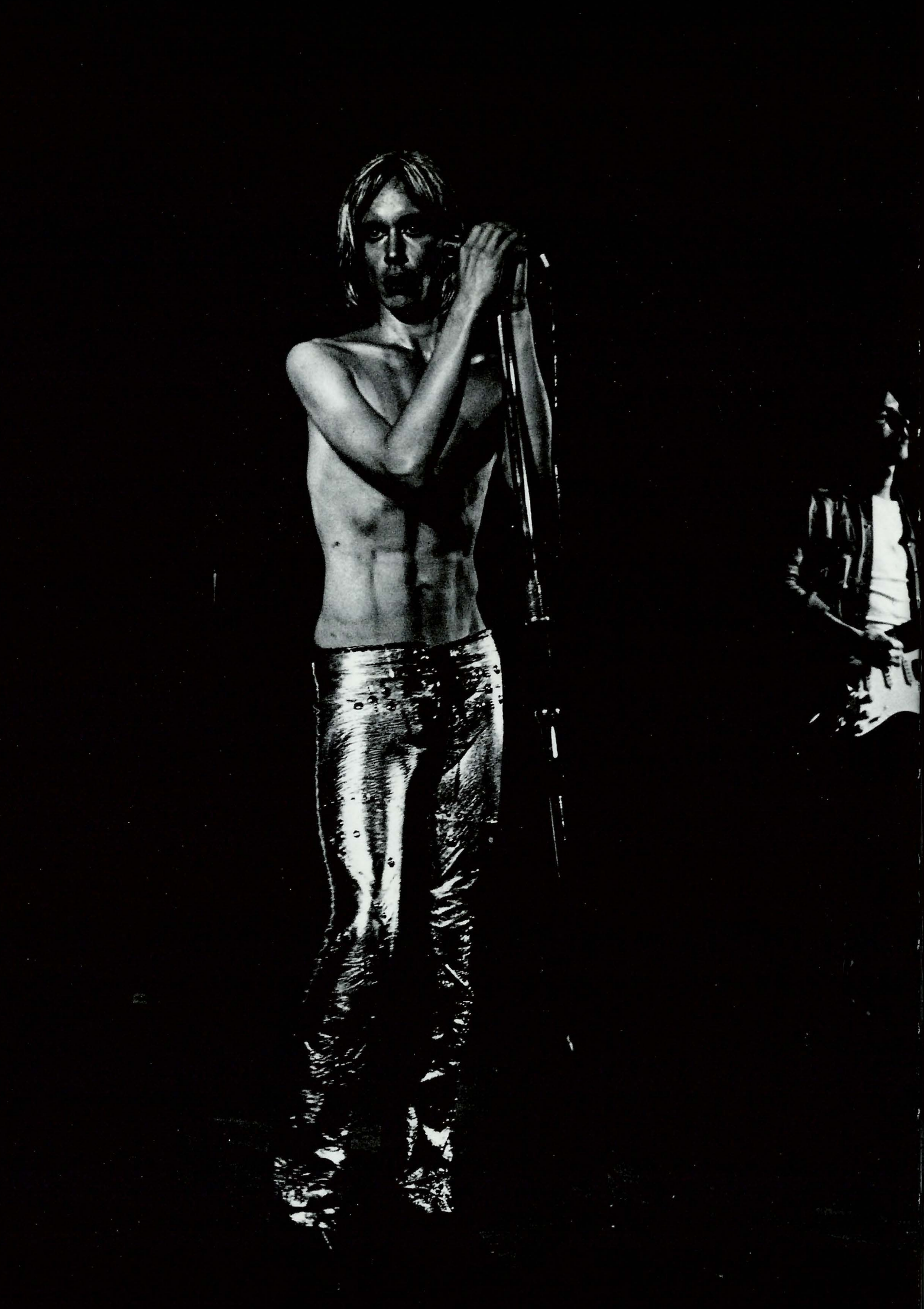


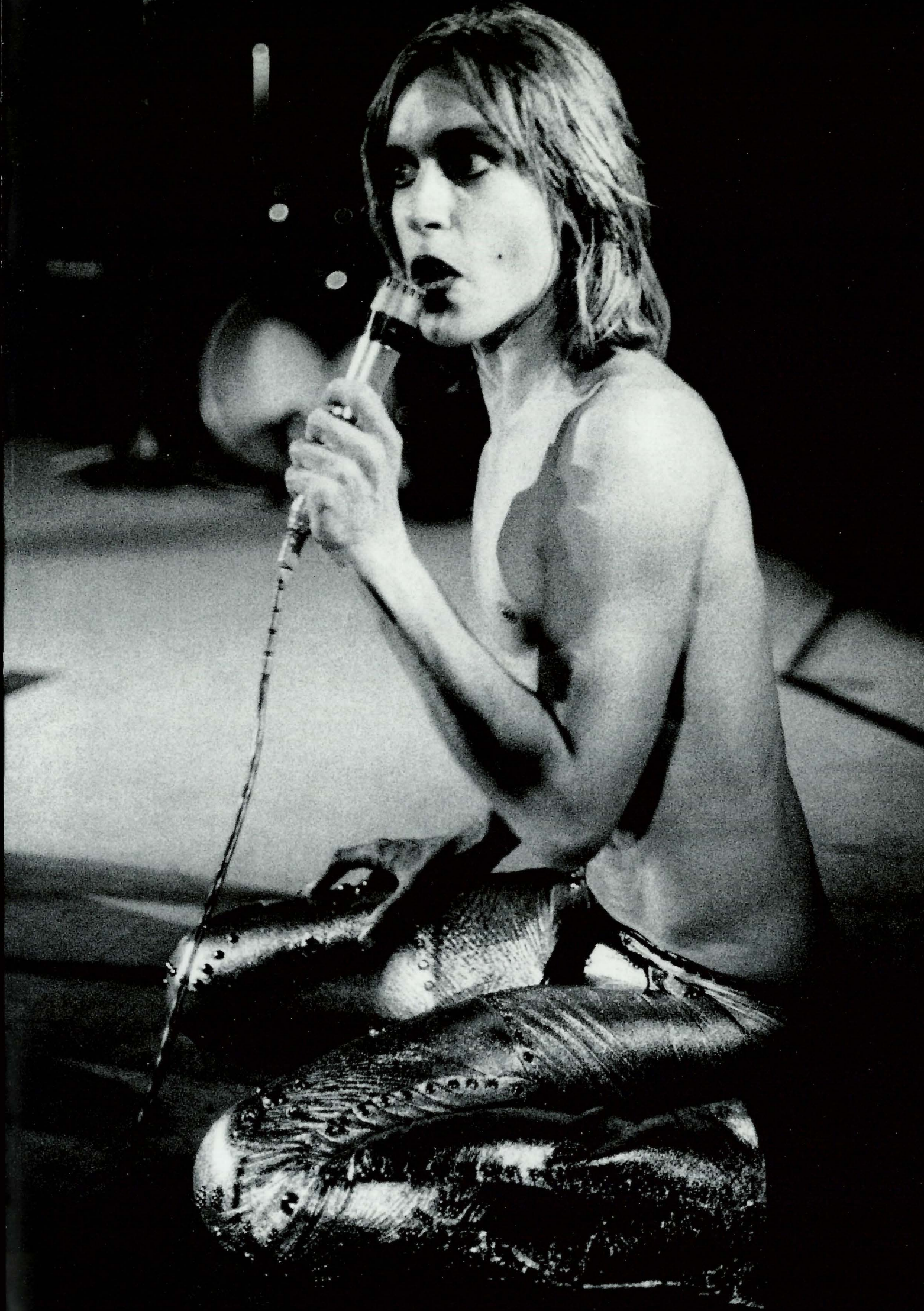


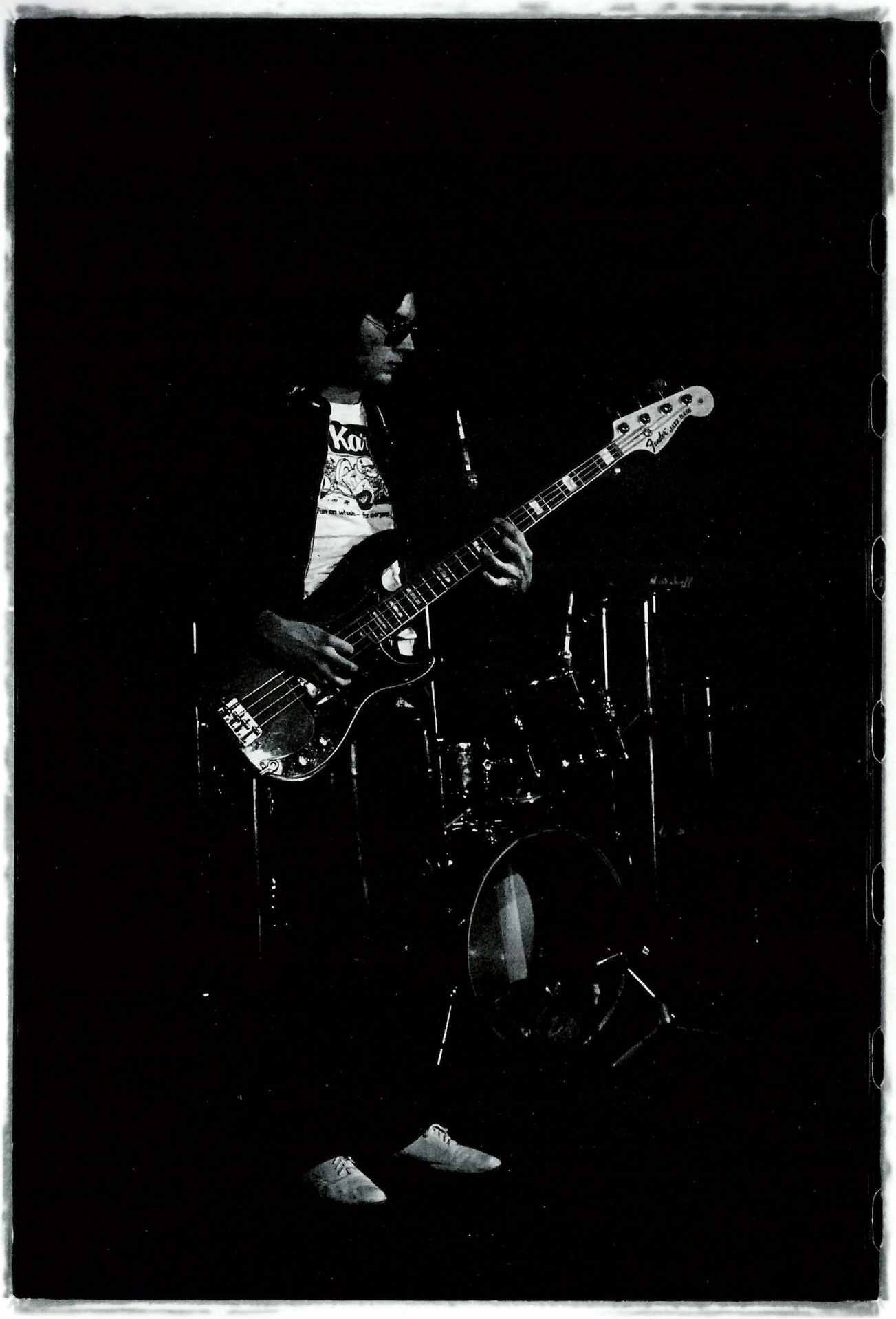


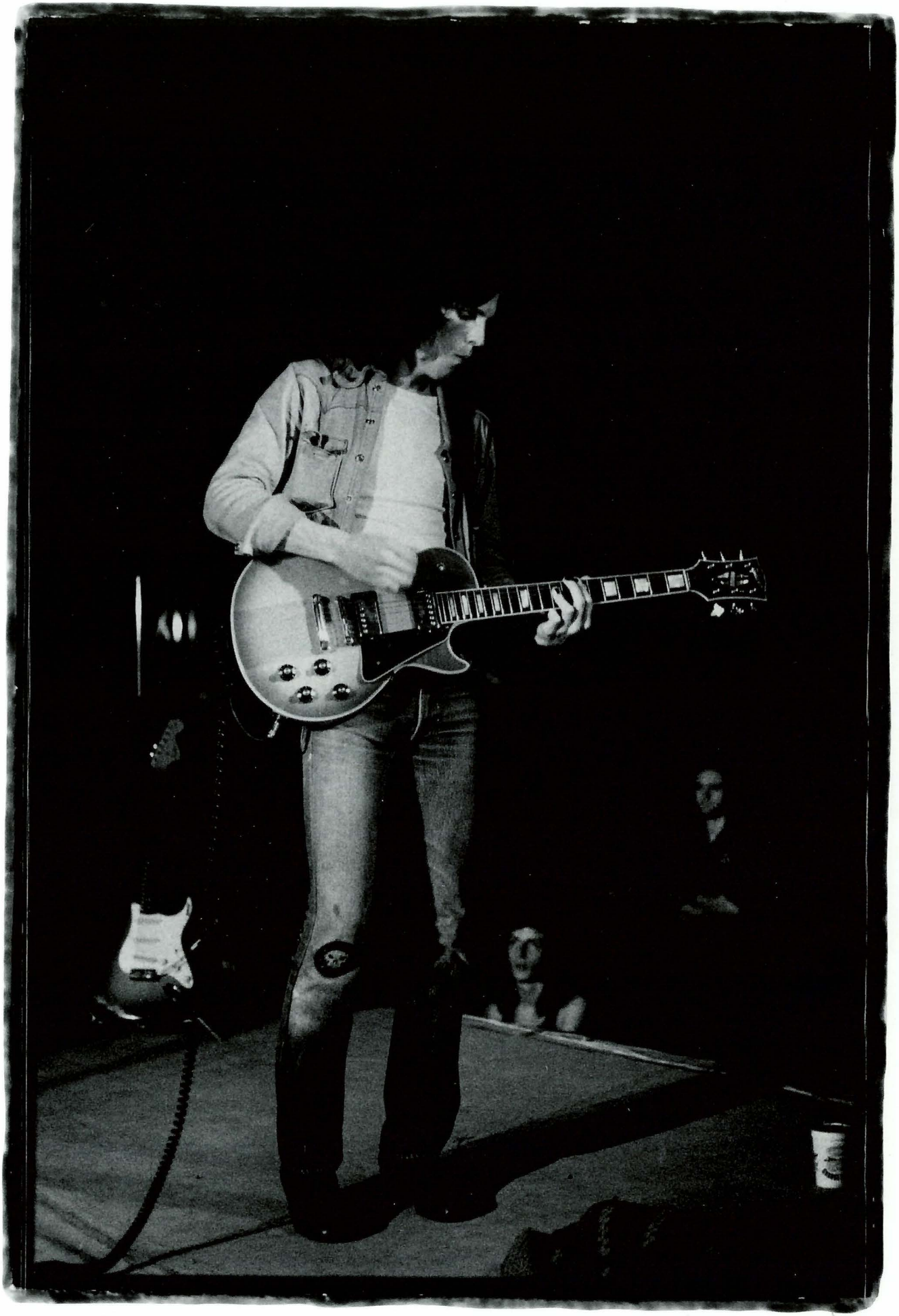


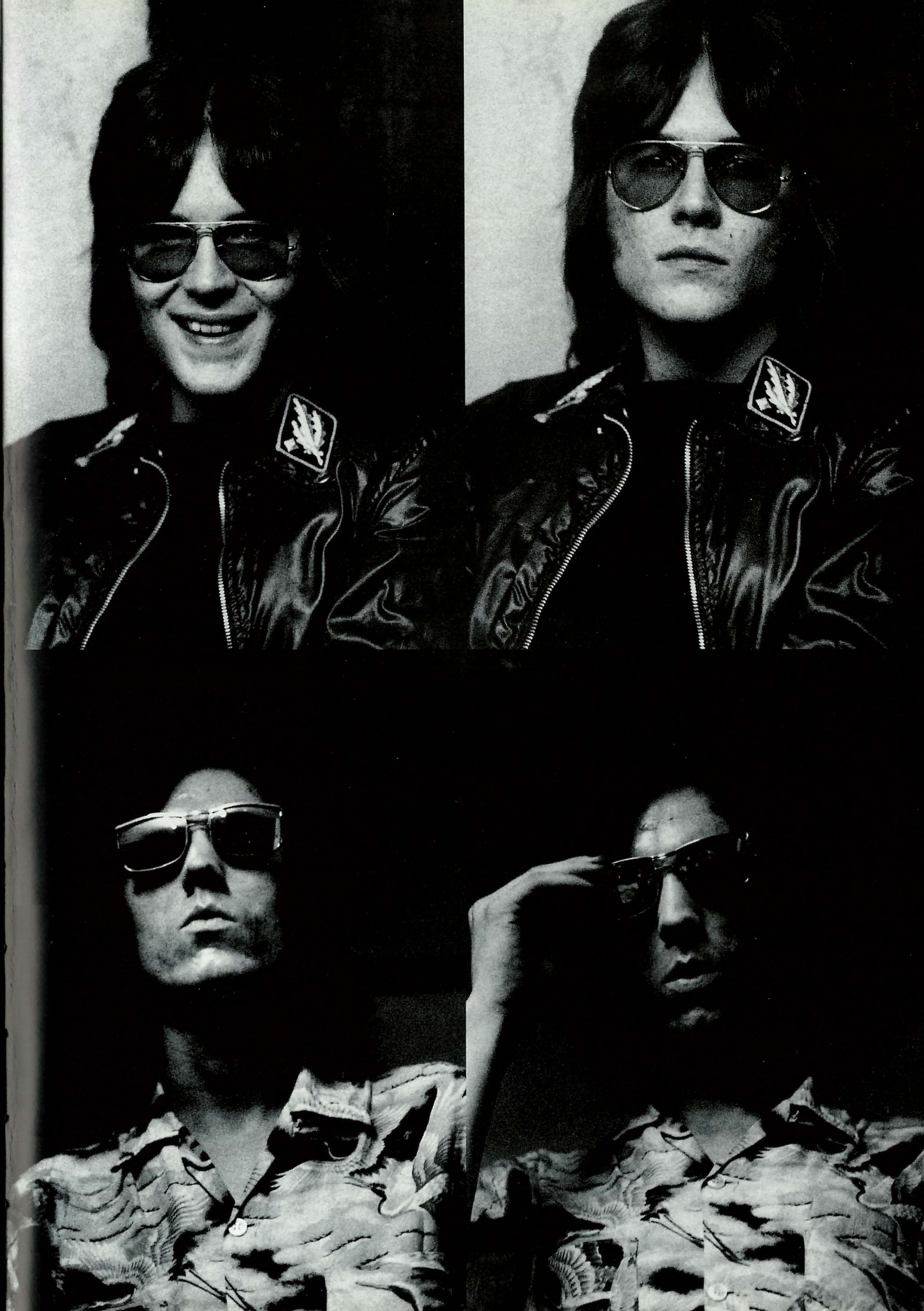


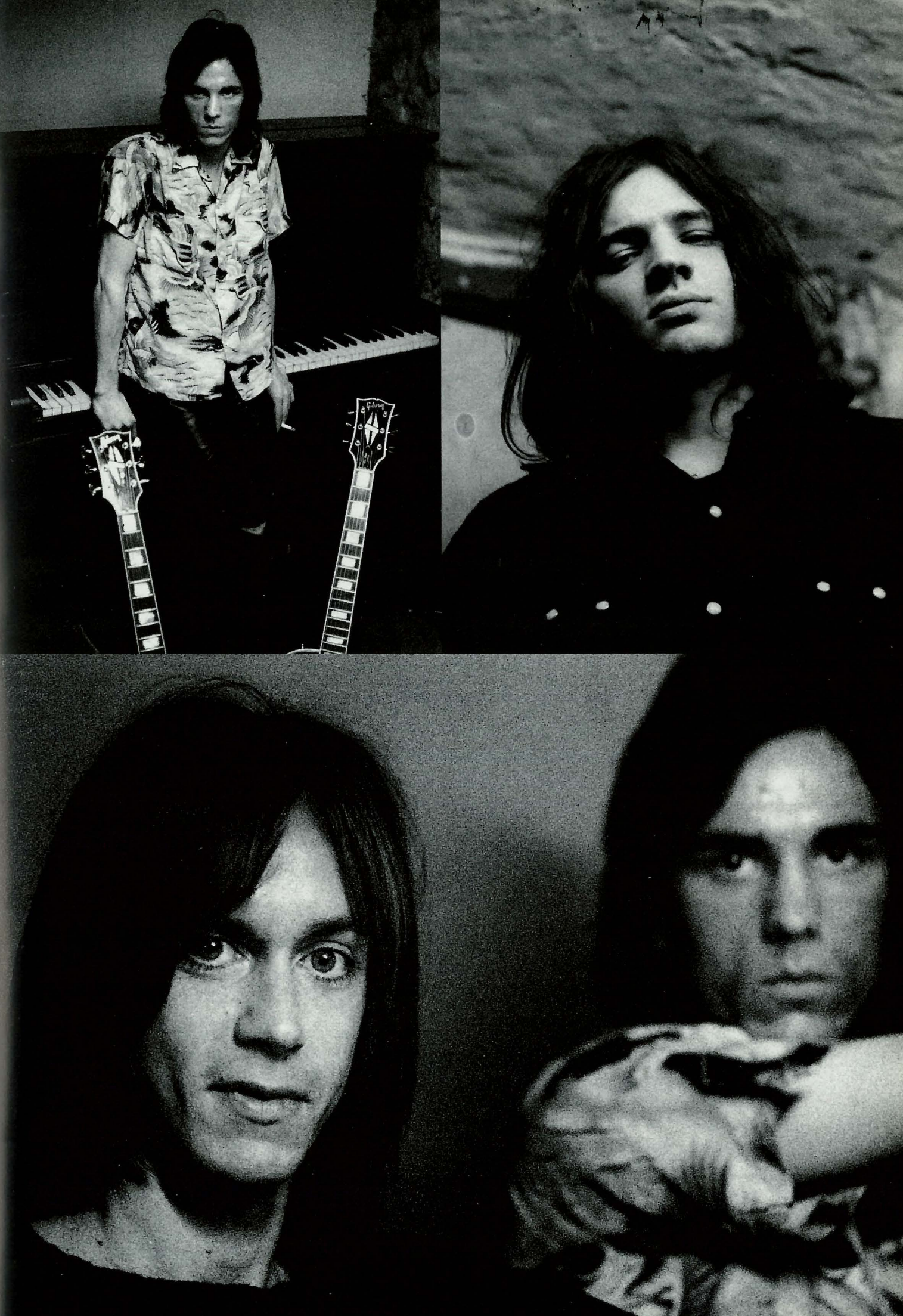


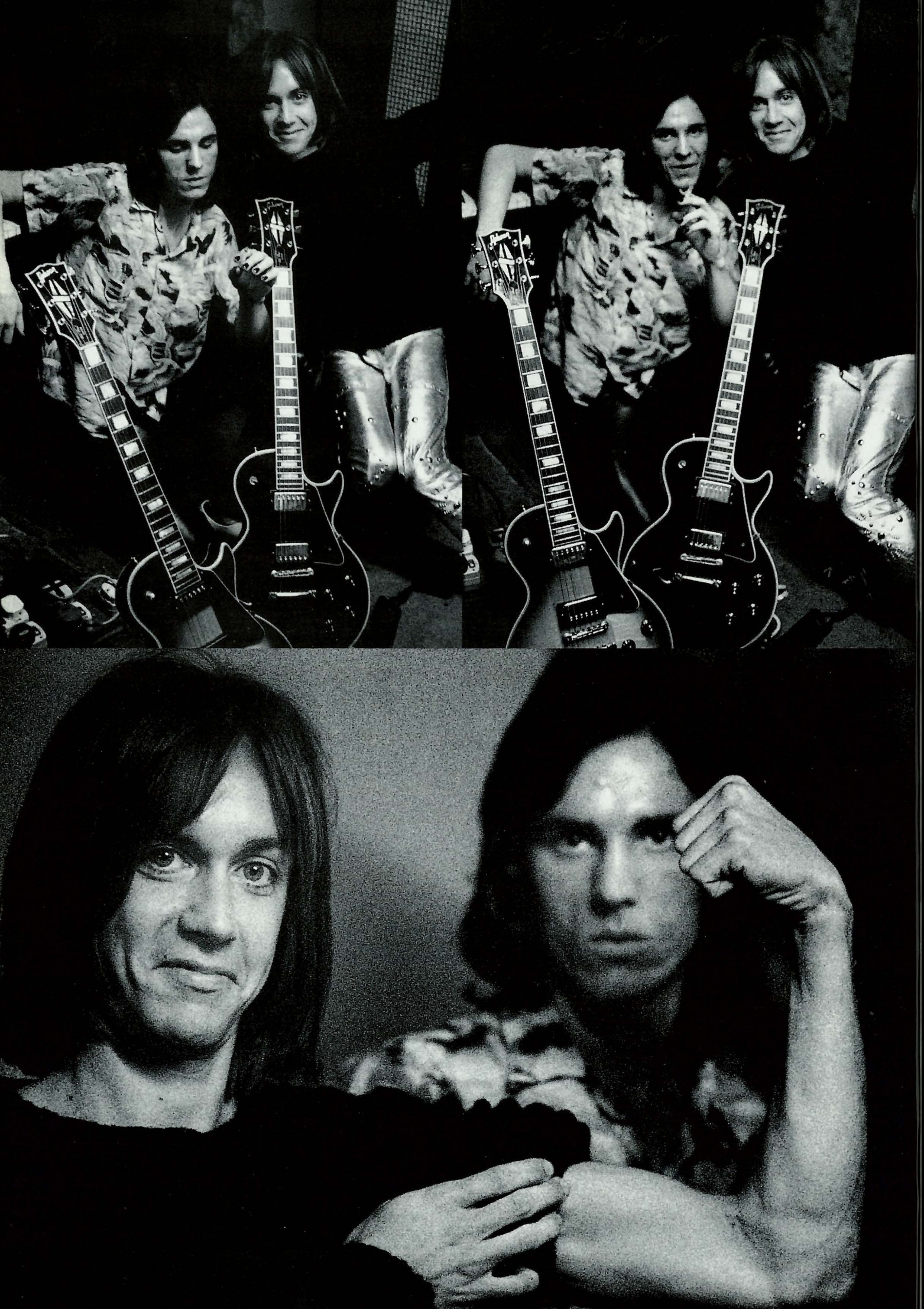


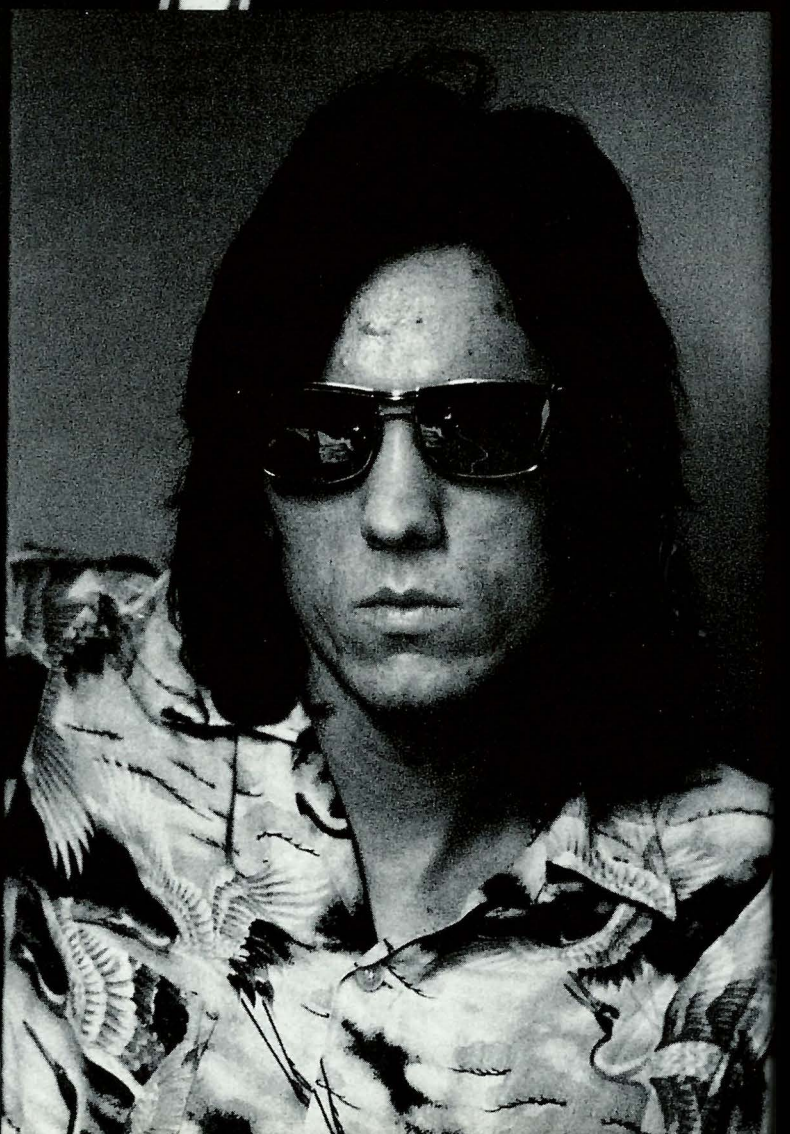

Fender JAZZ BASS

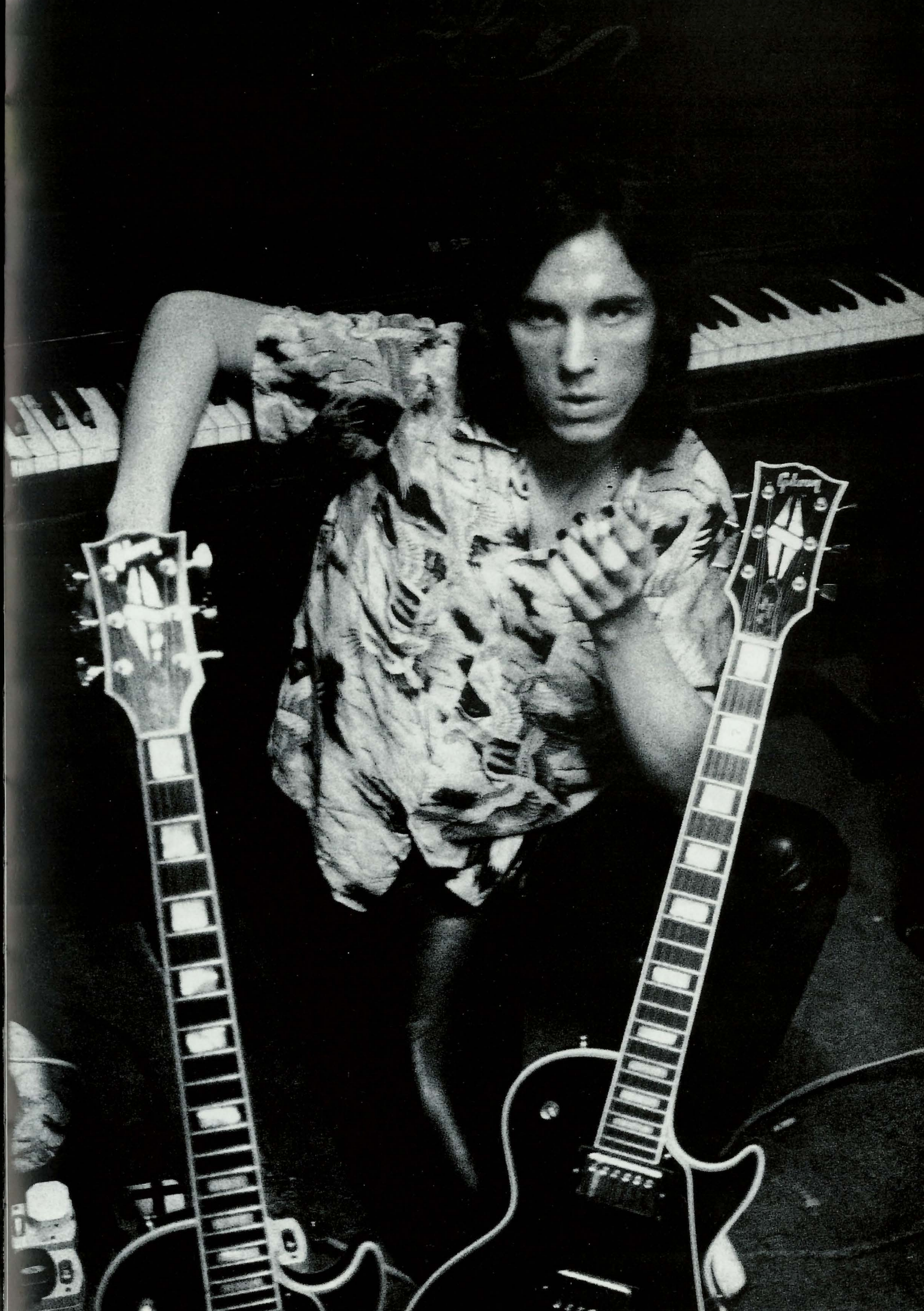


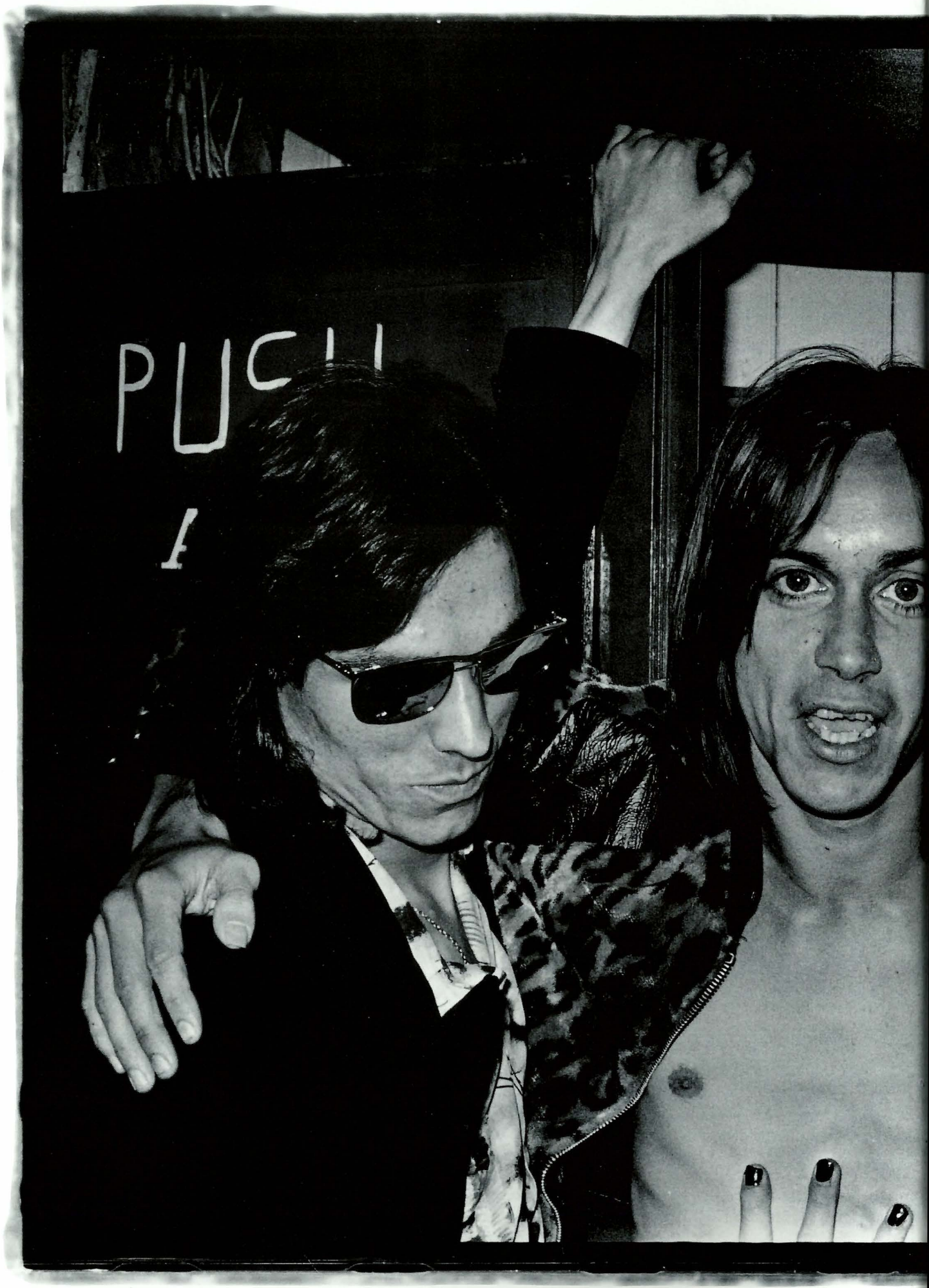












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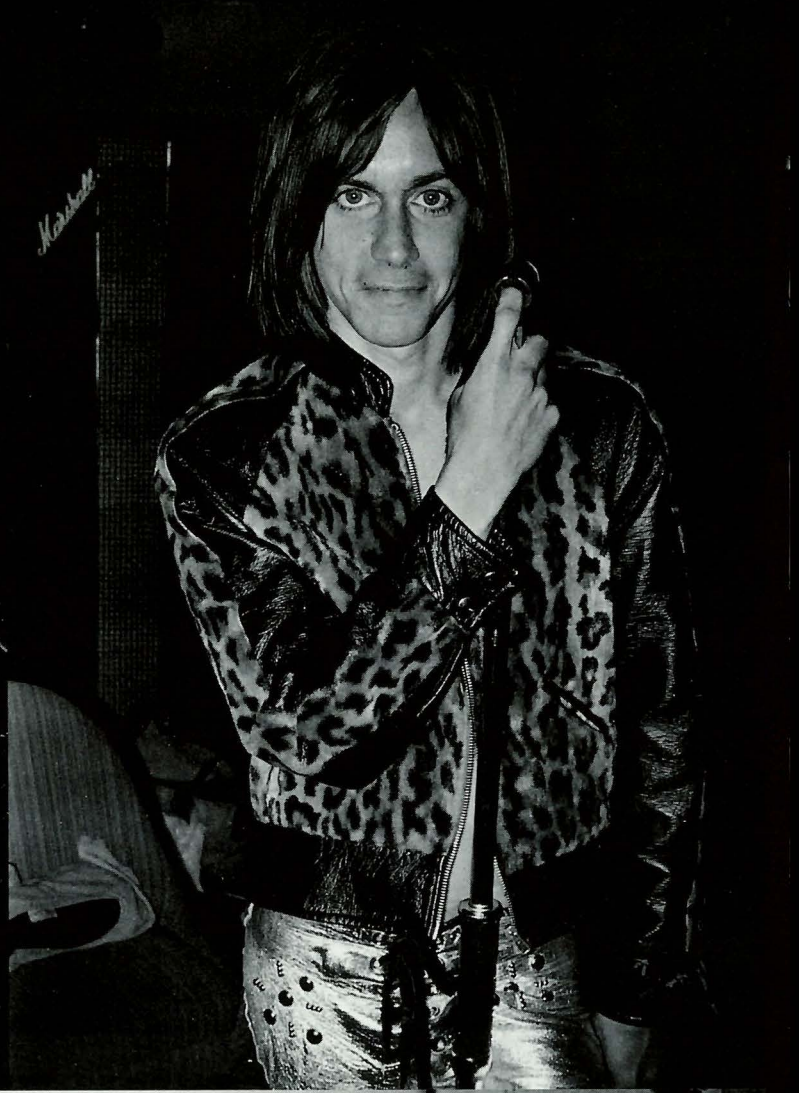

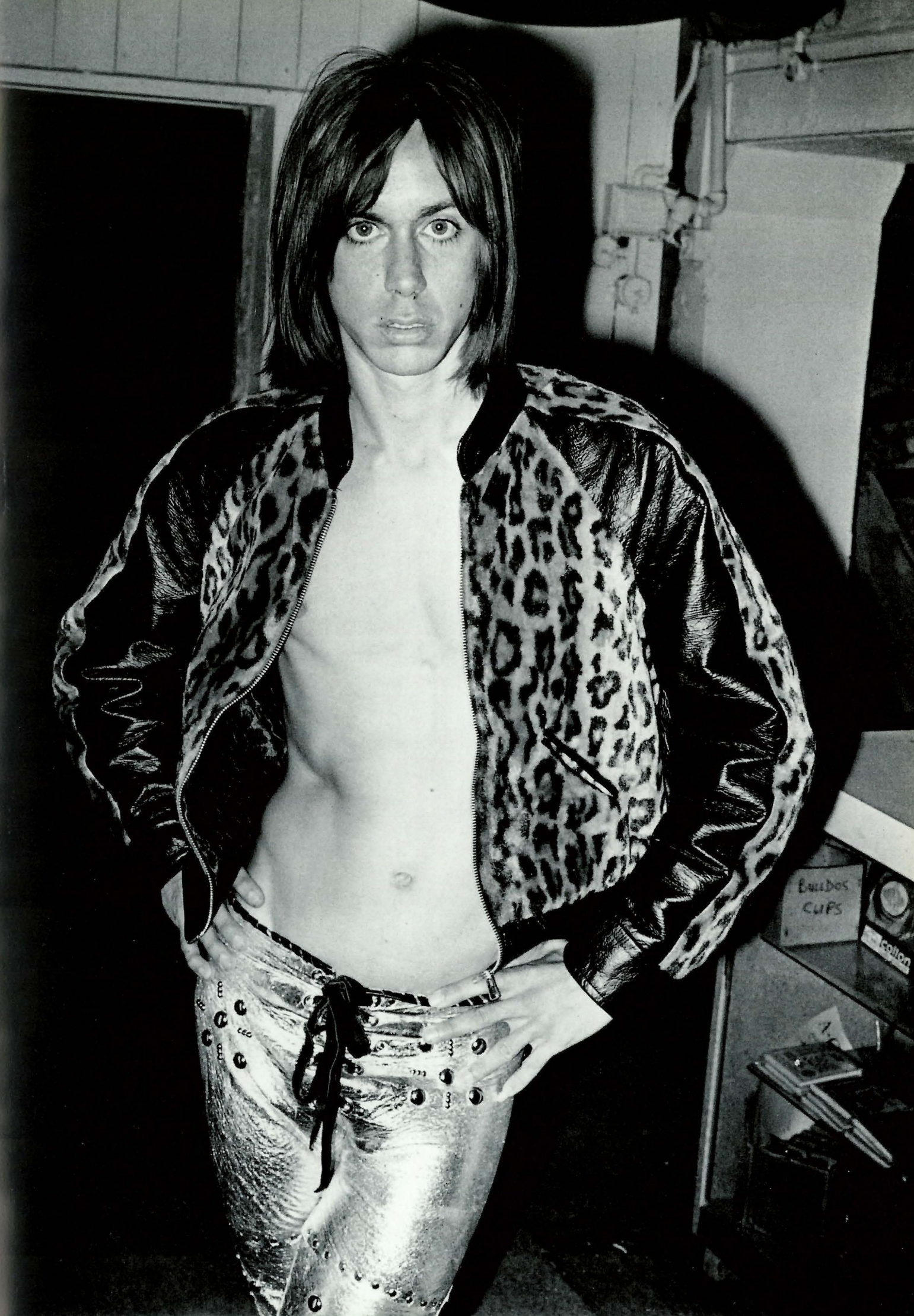
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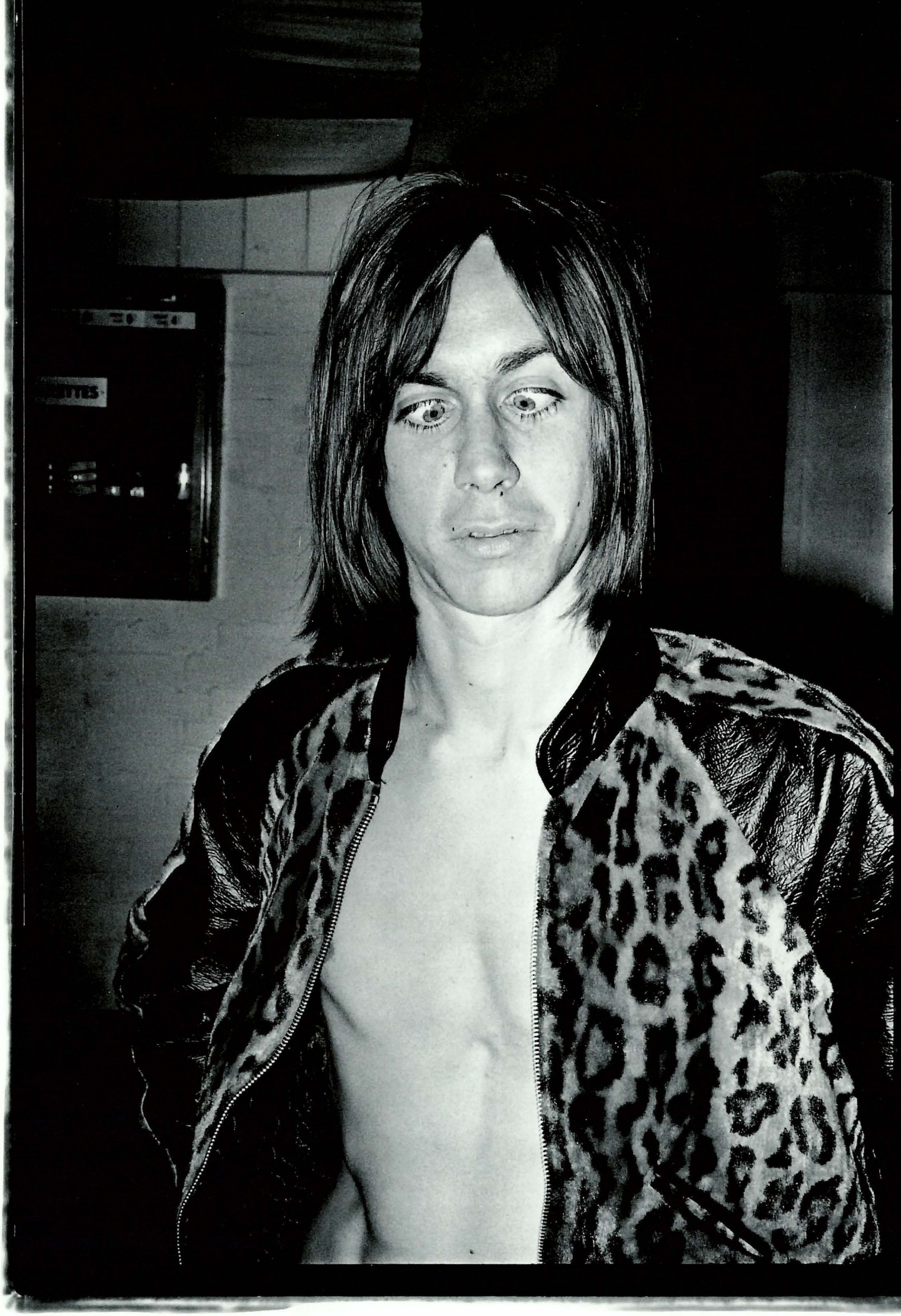

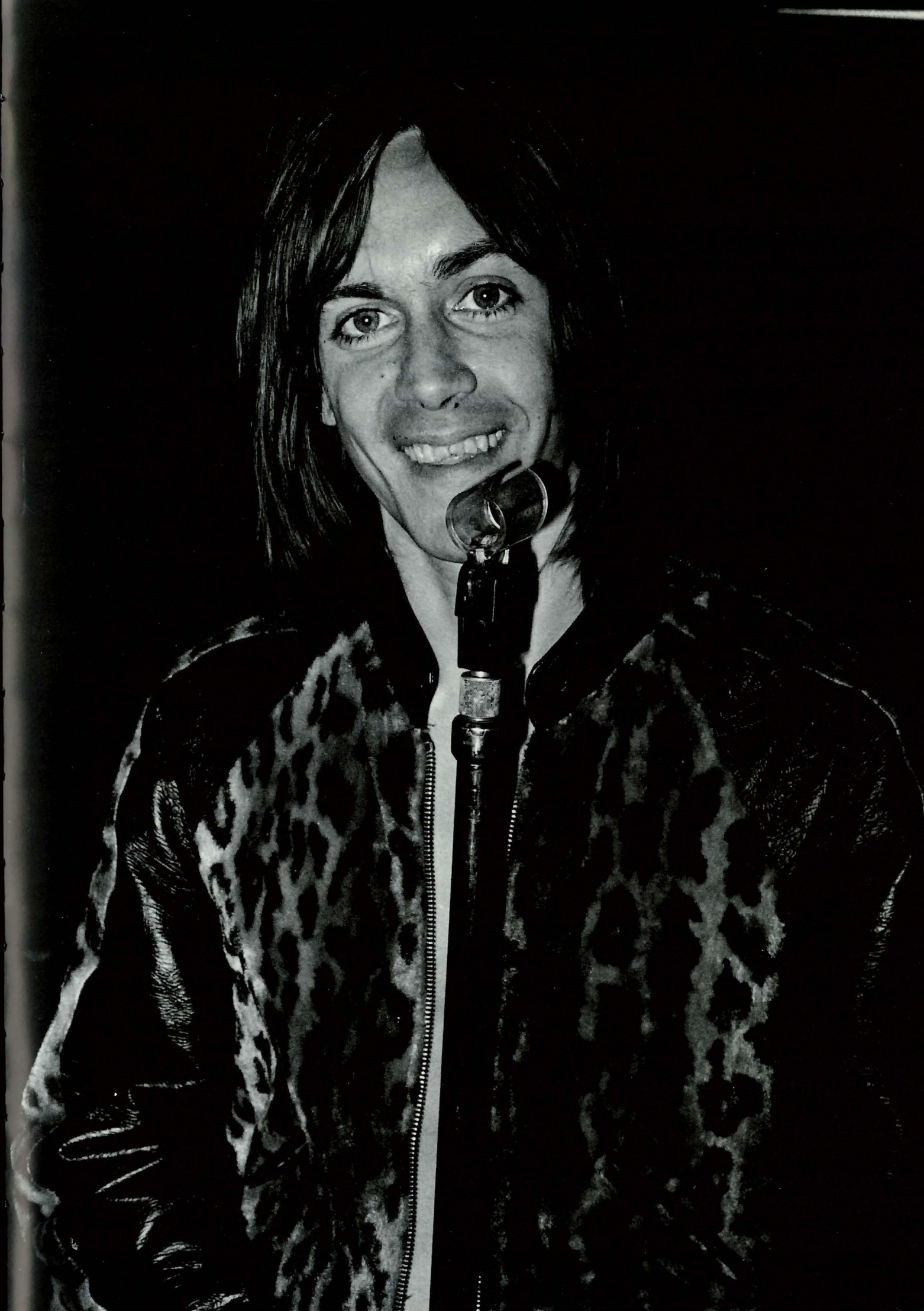

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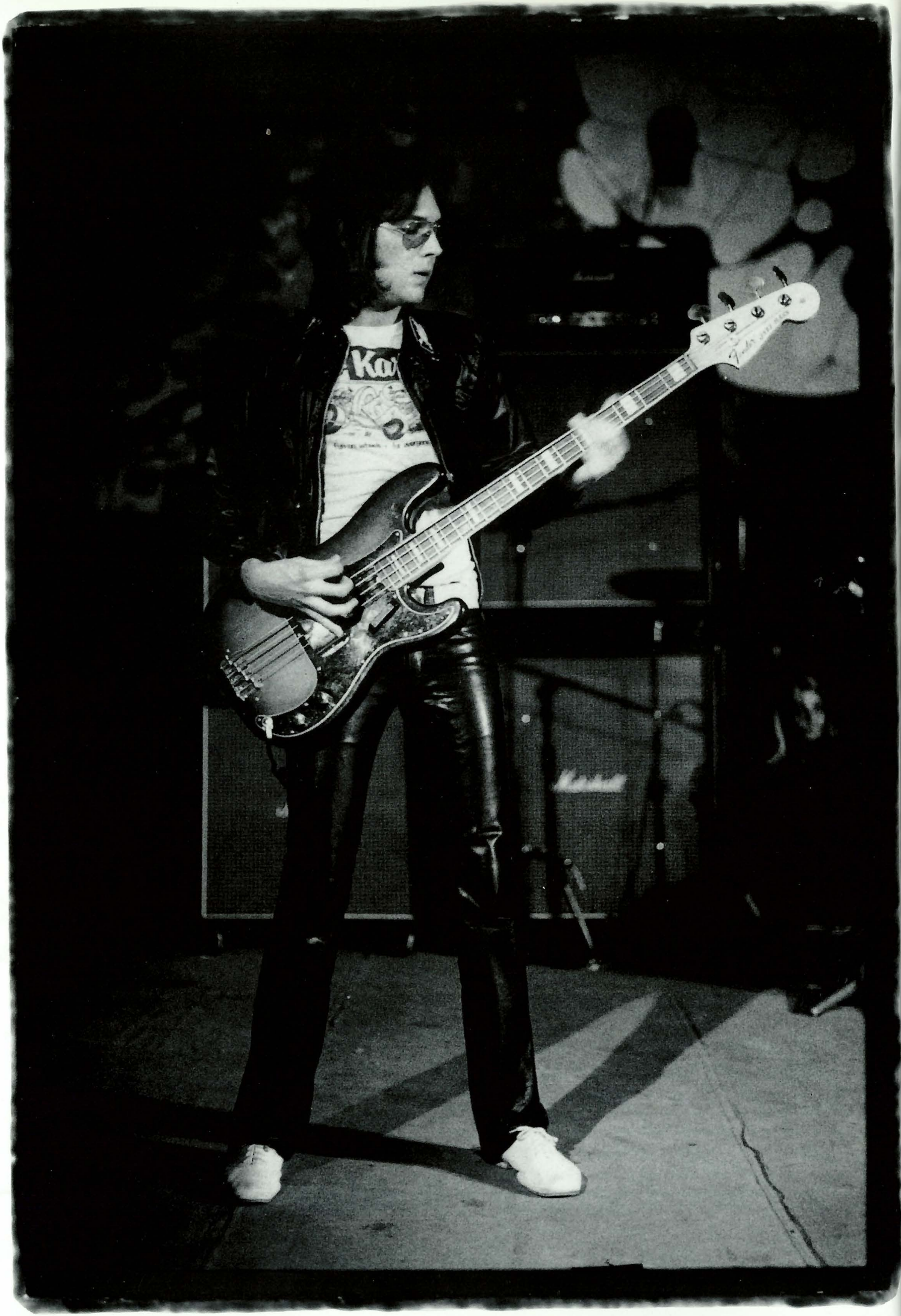

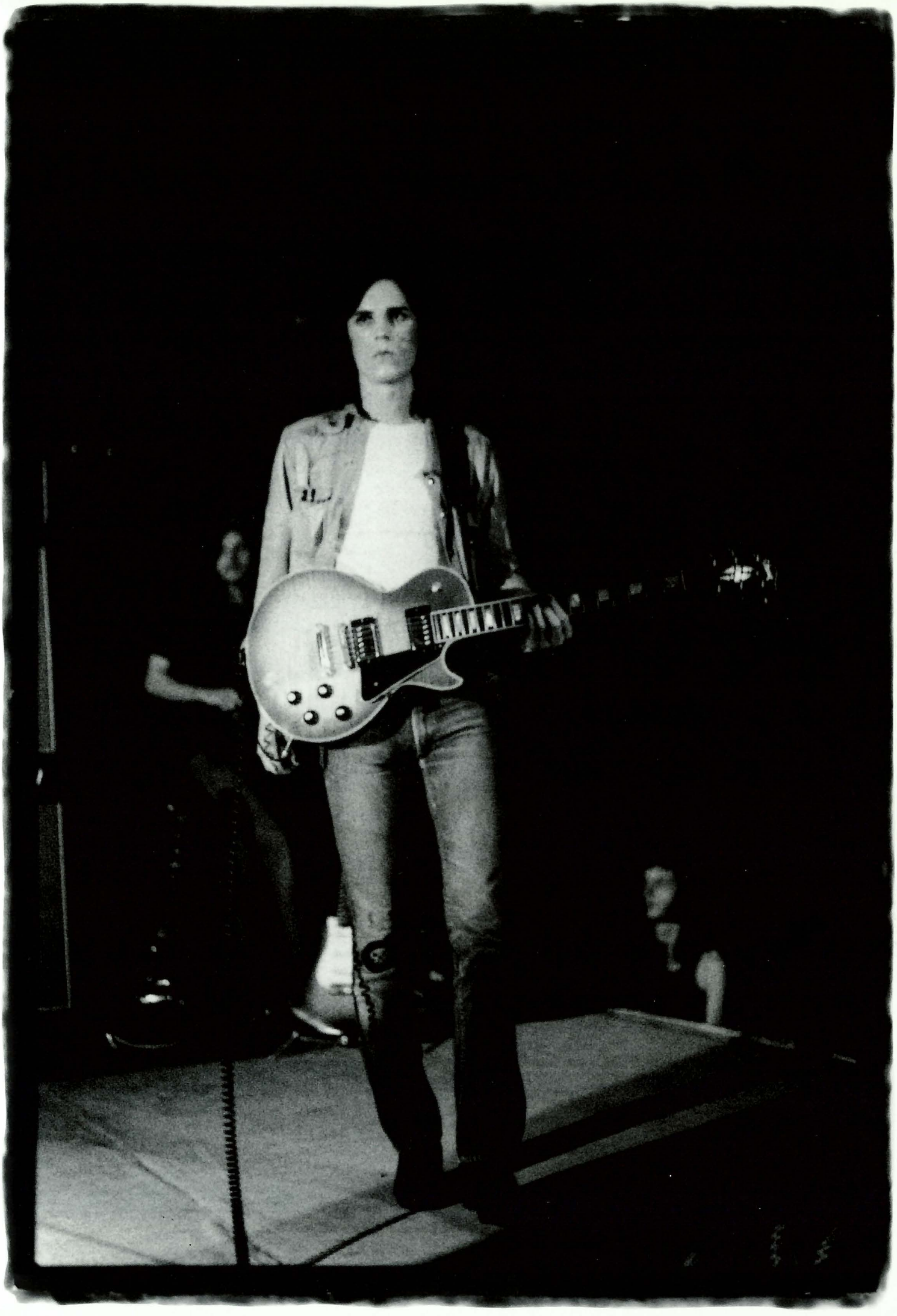

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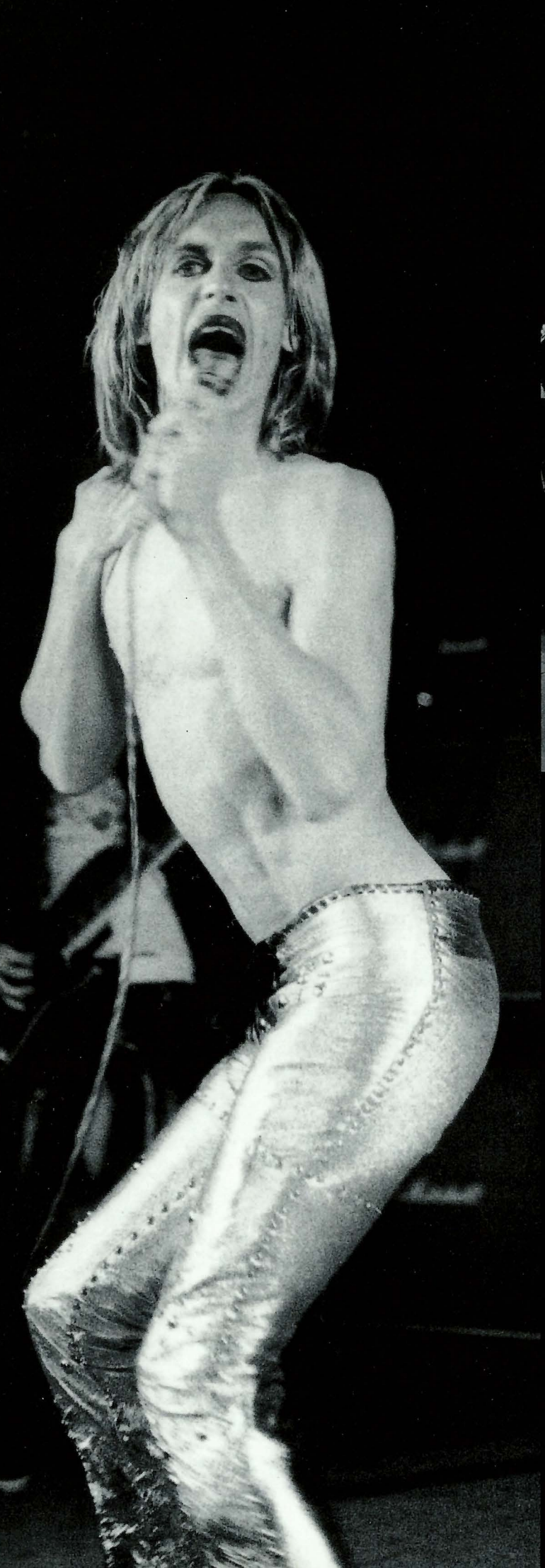

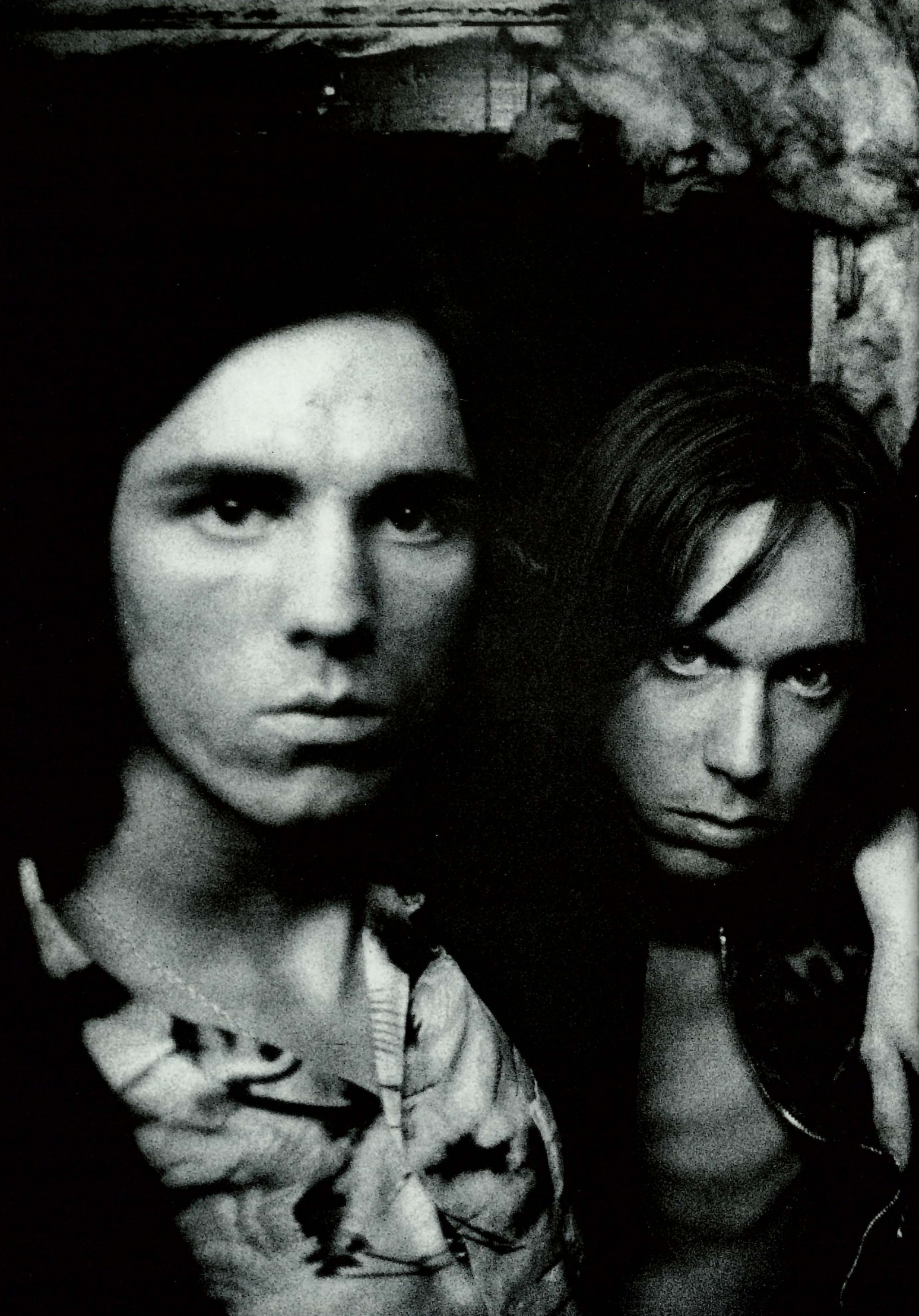

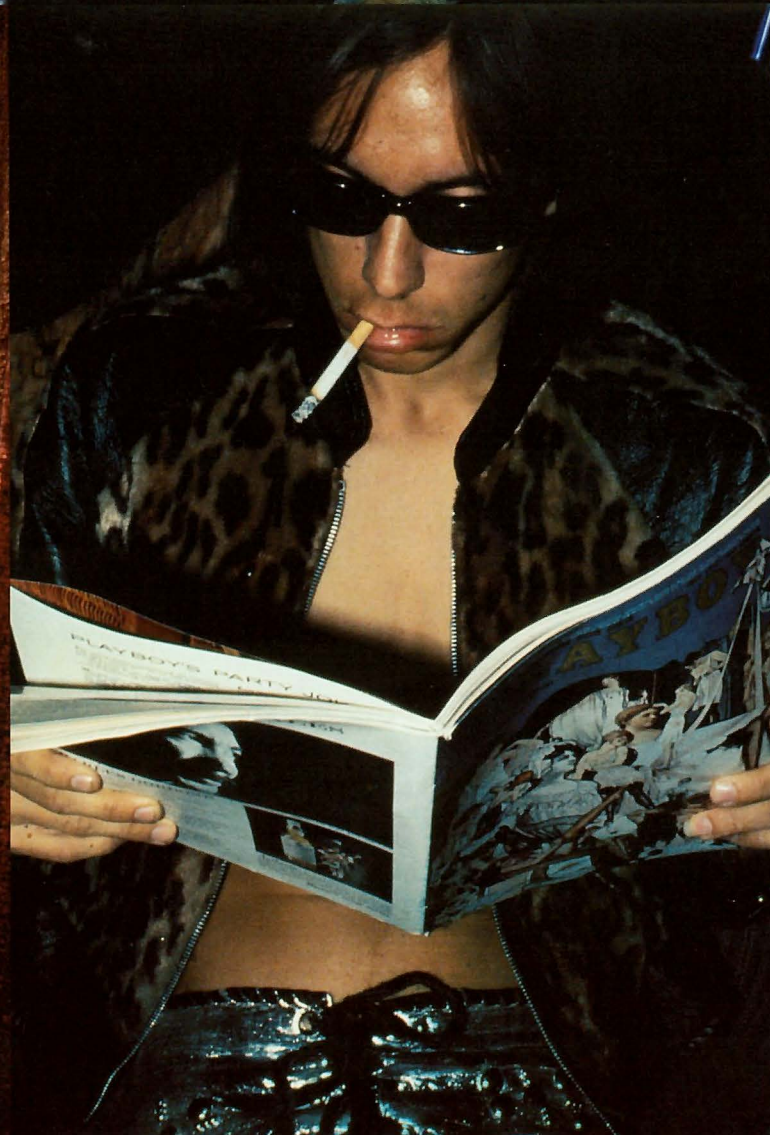
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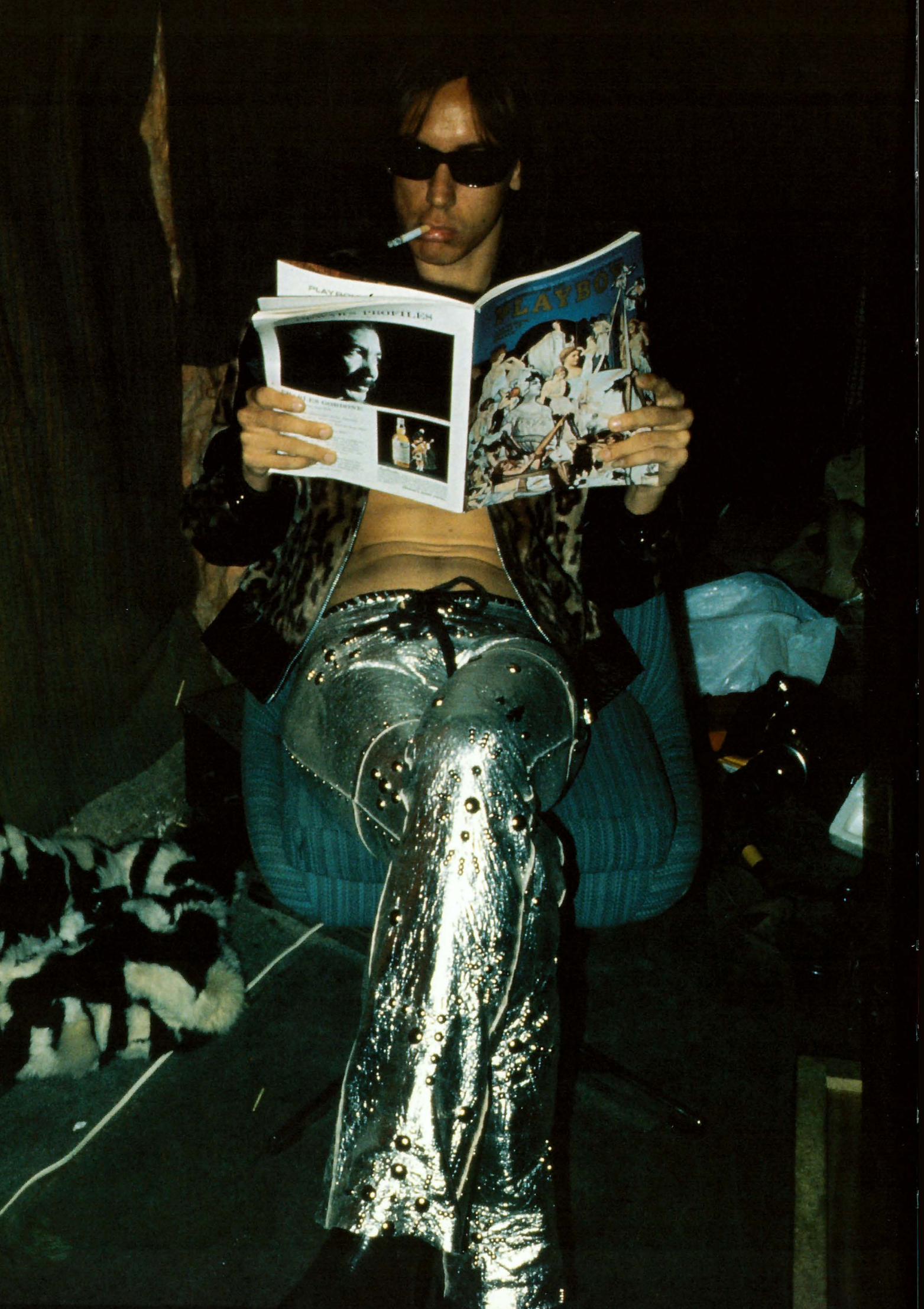
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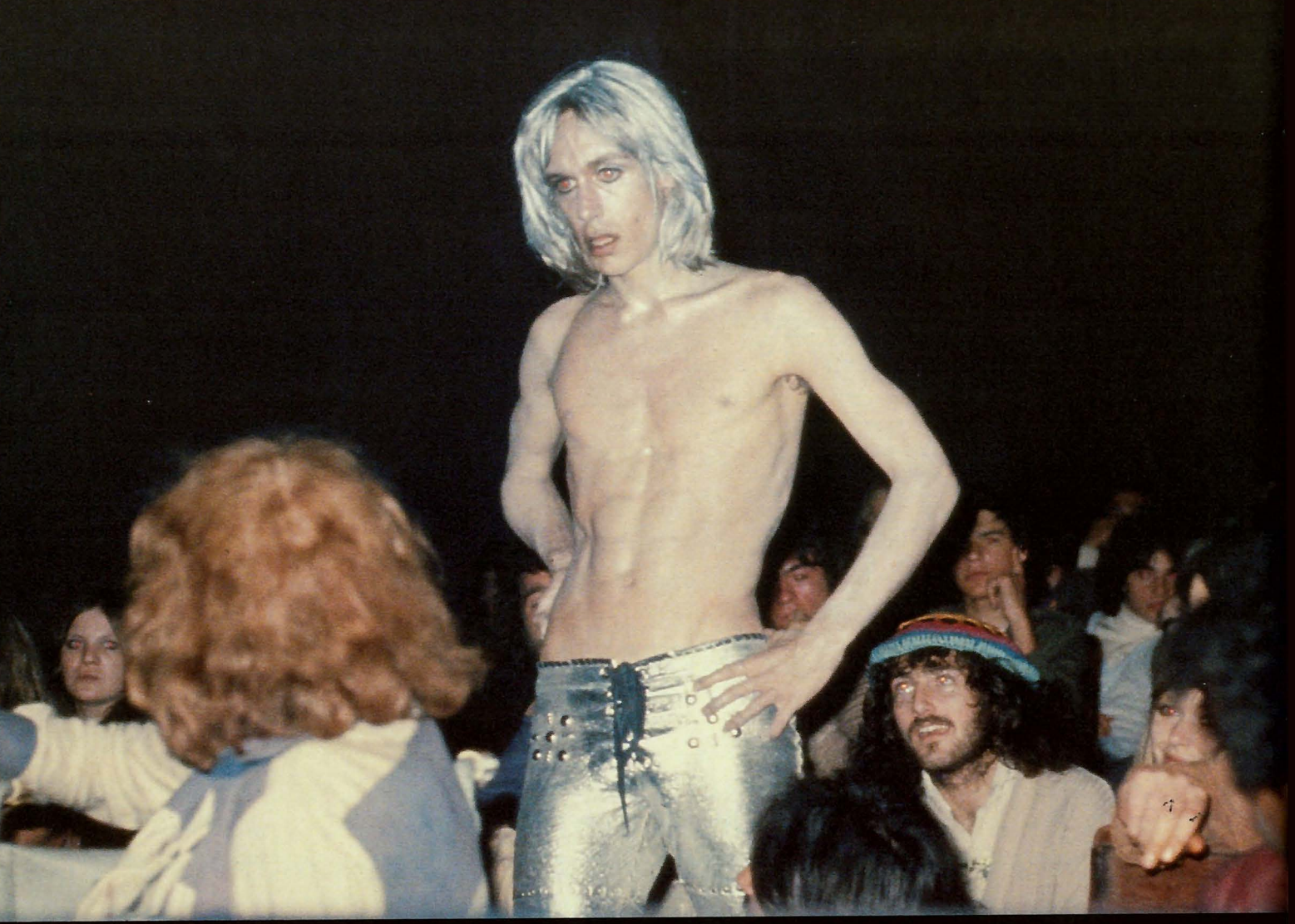

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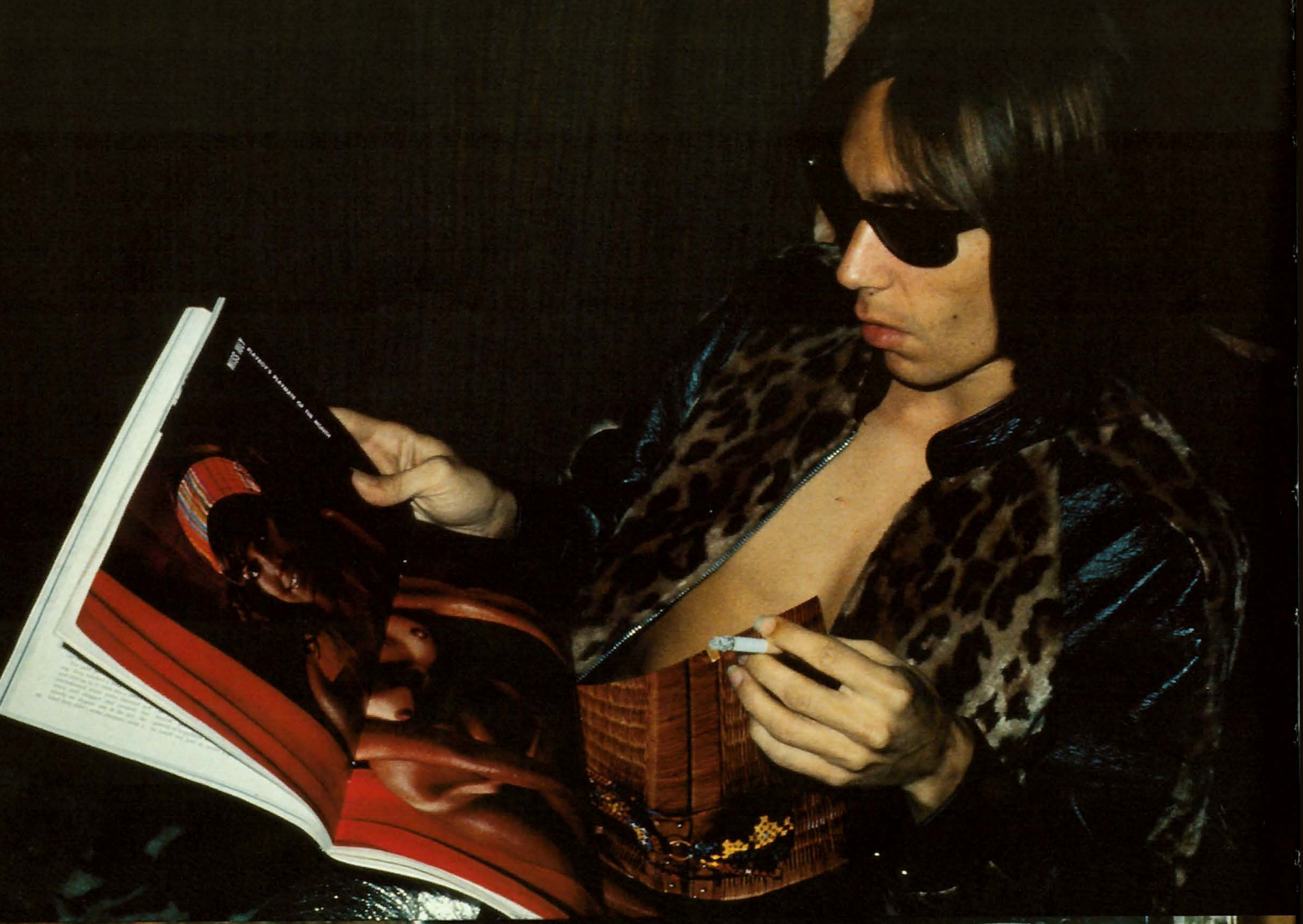

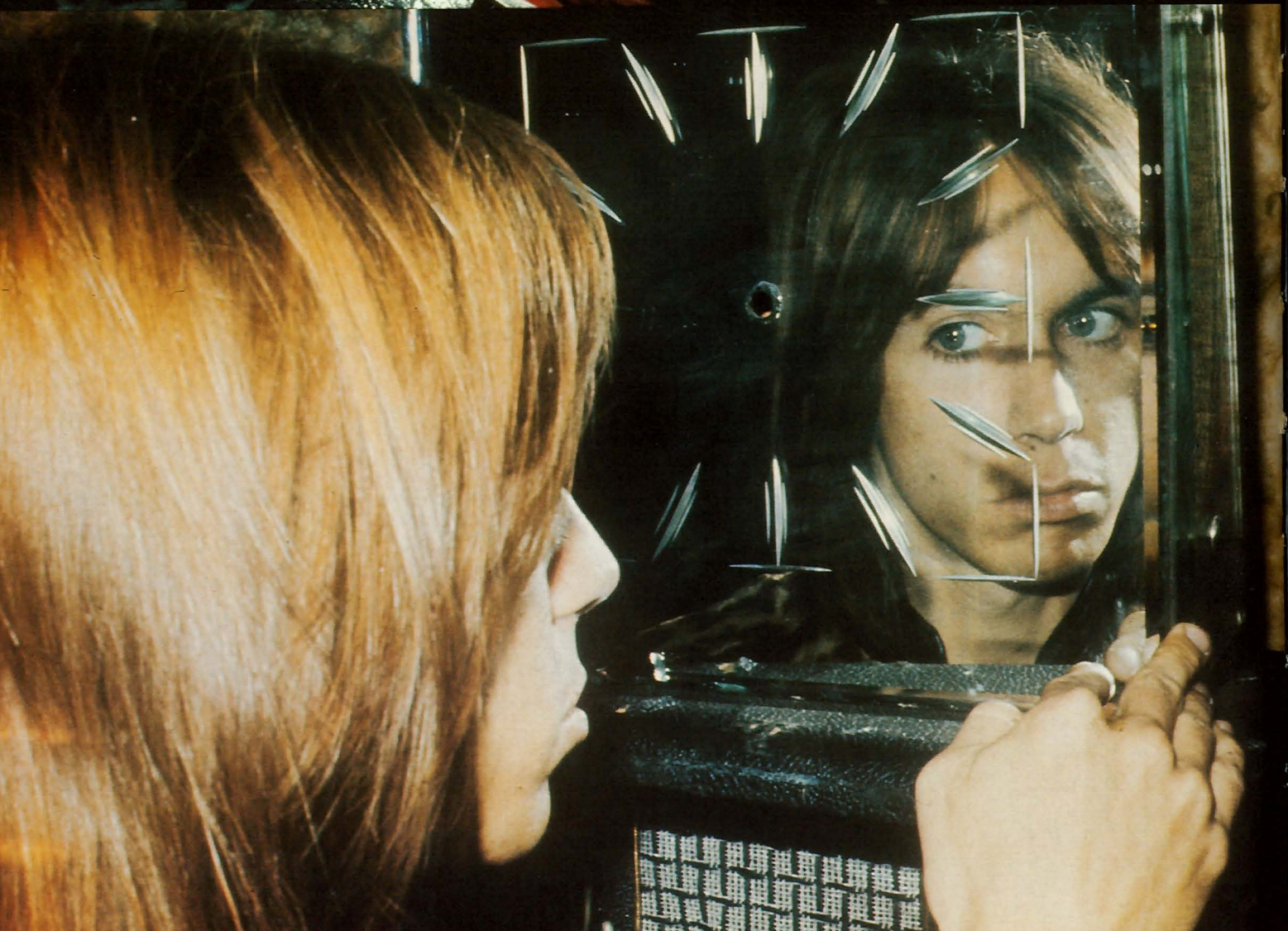

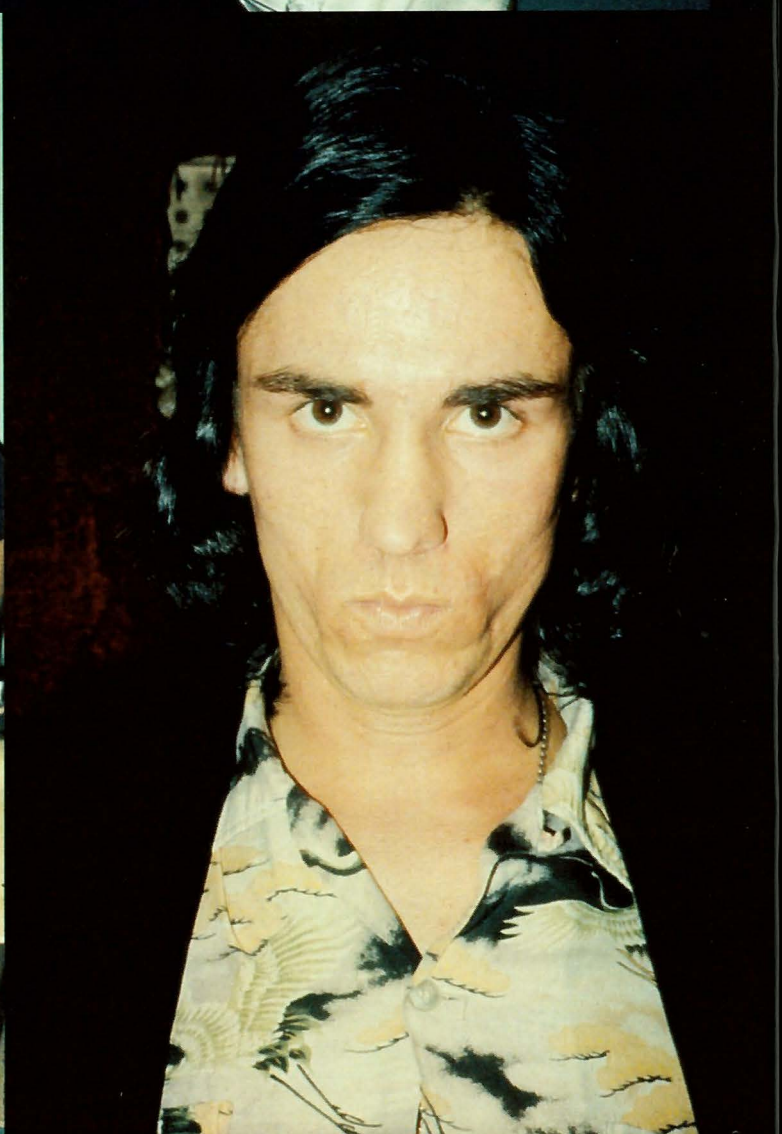

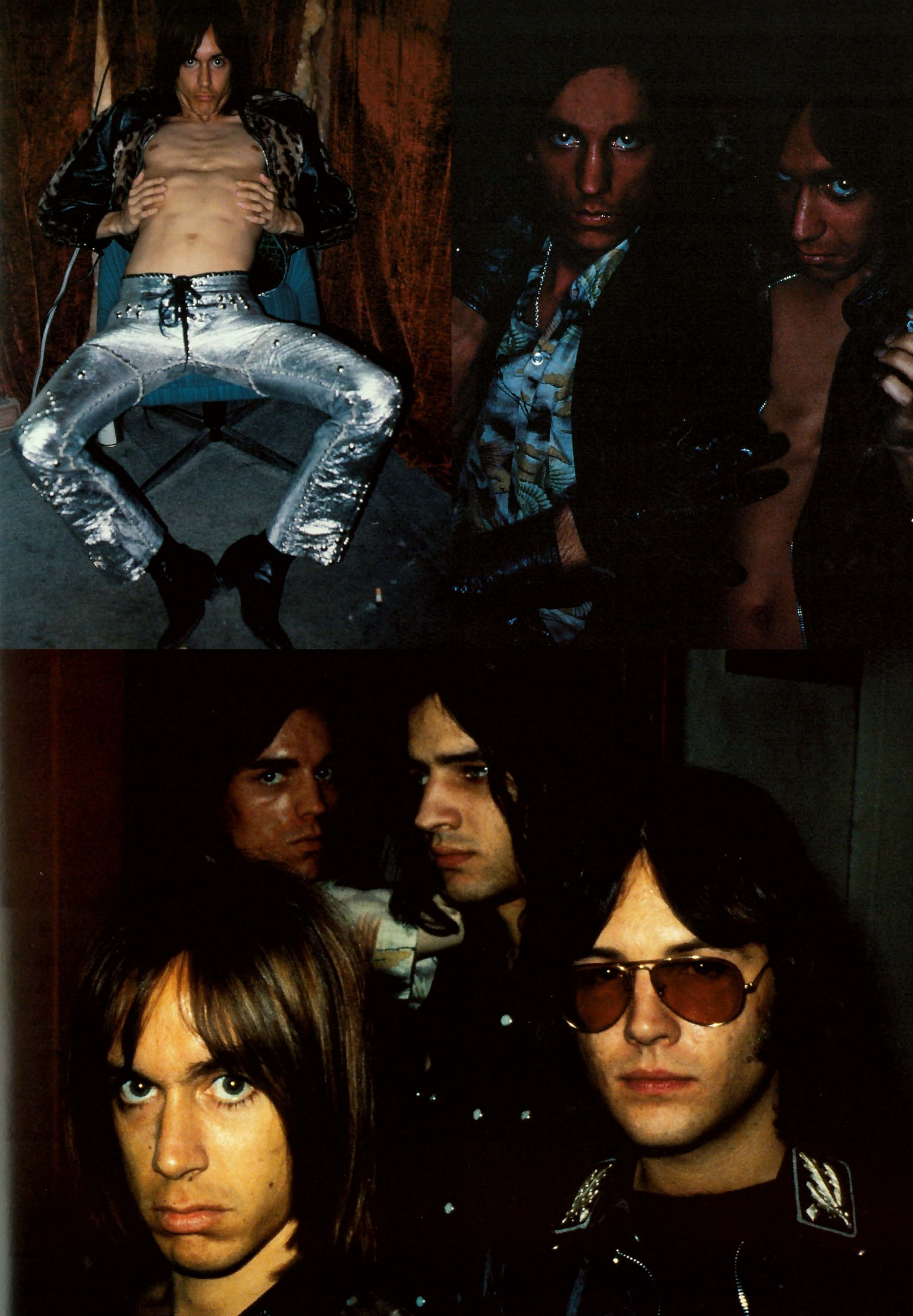

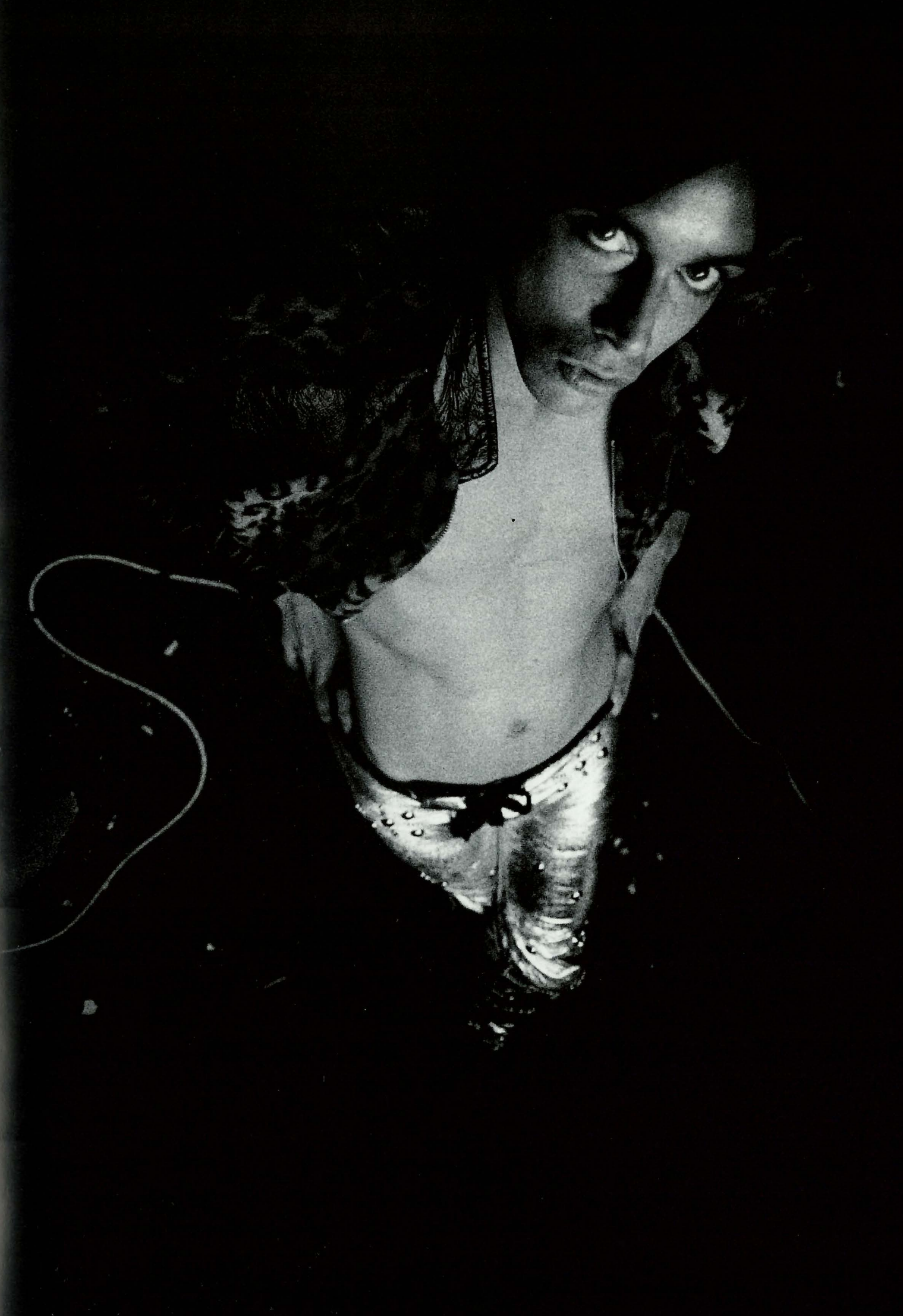

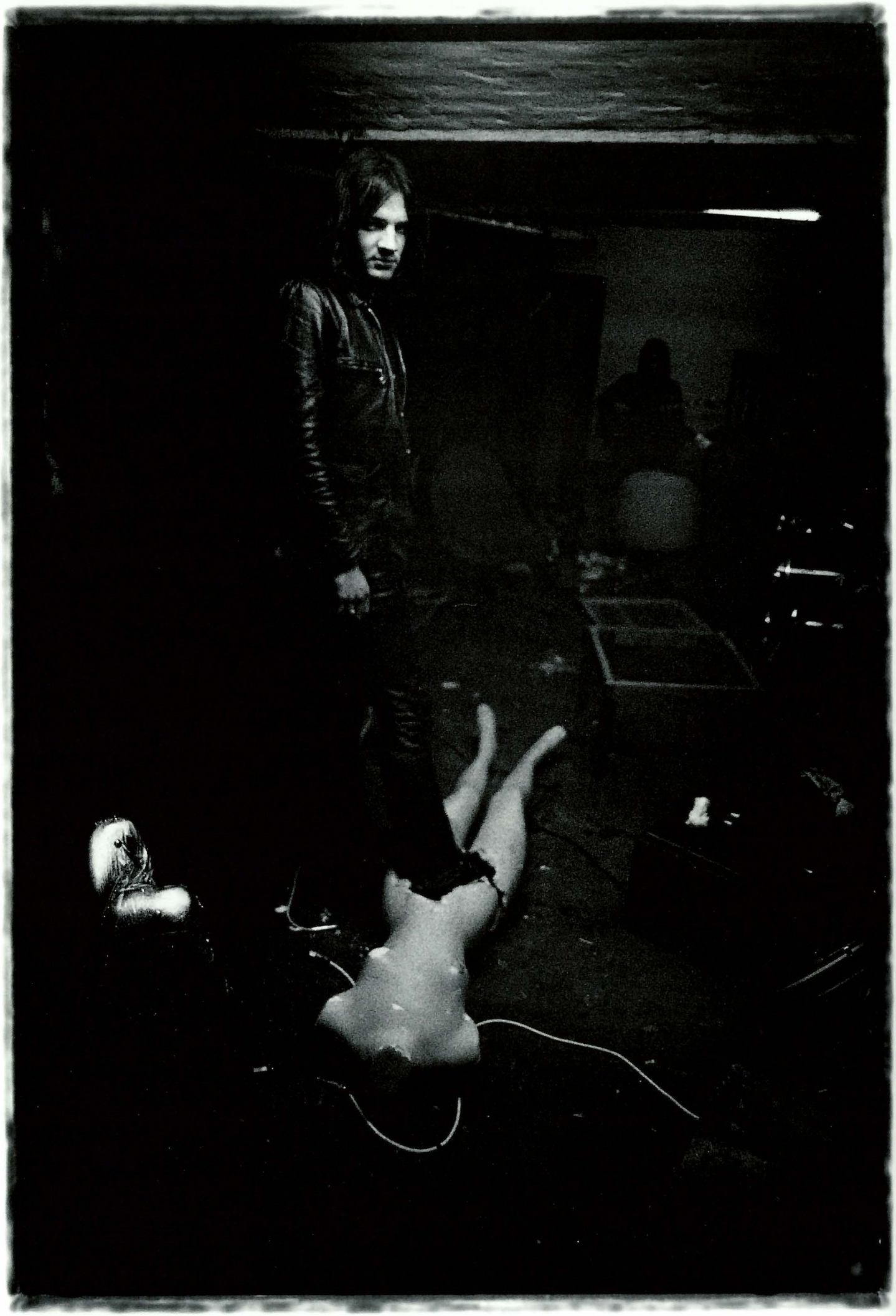

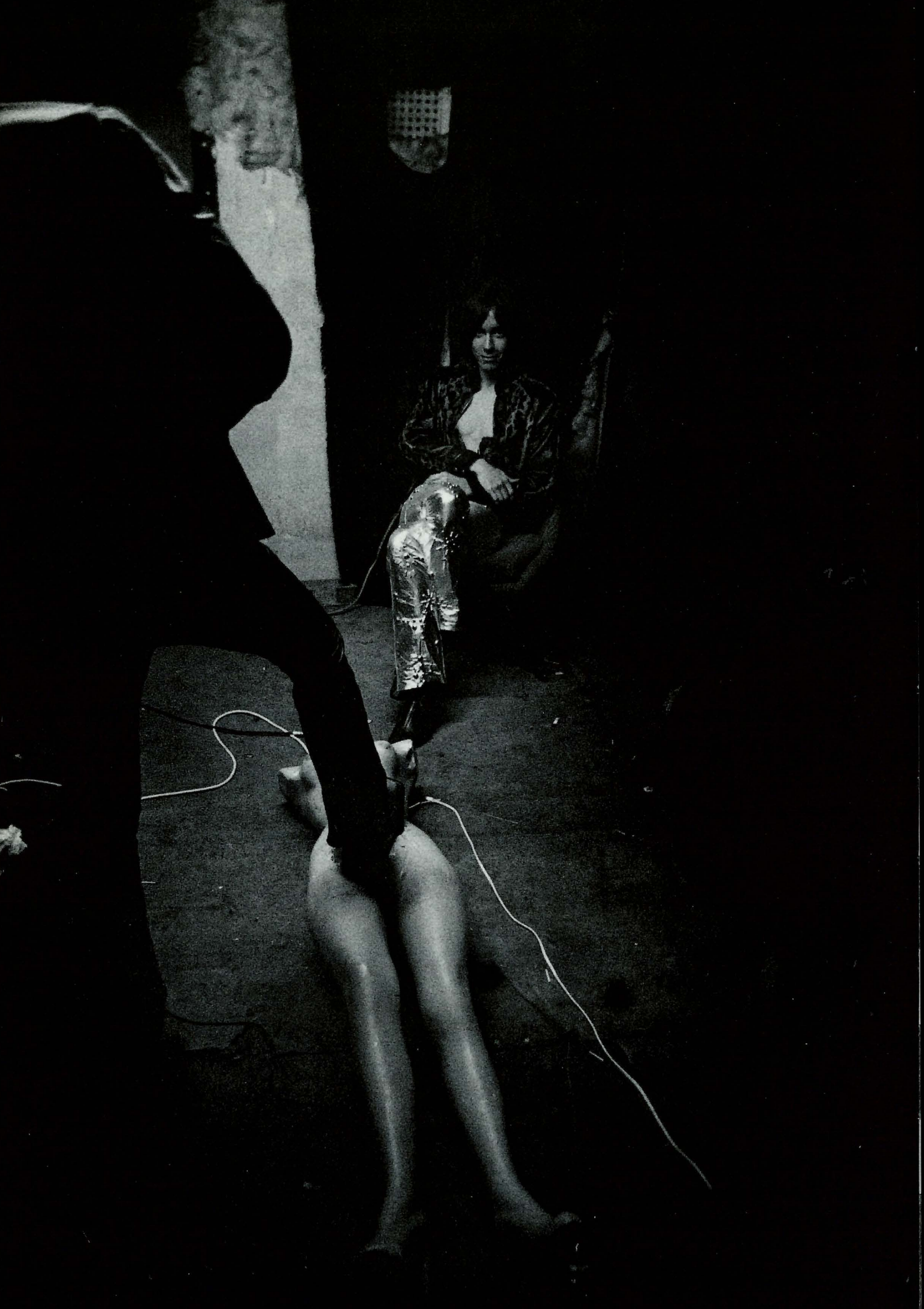

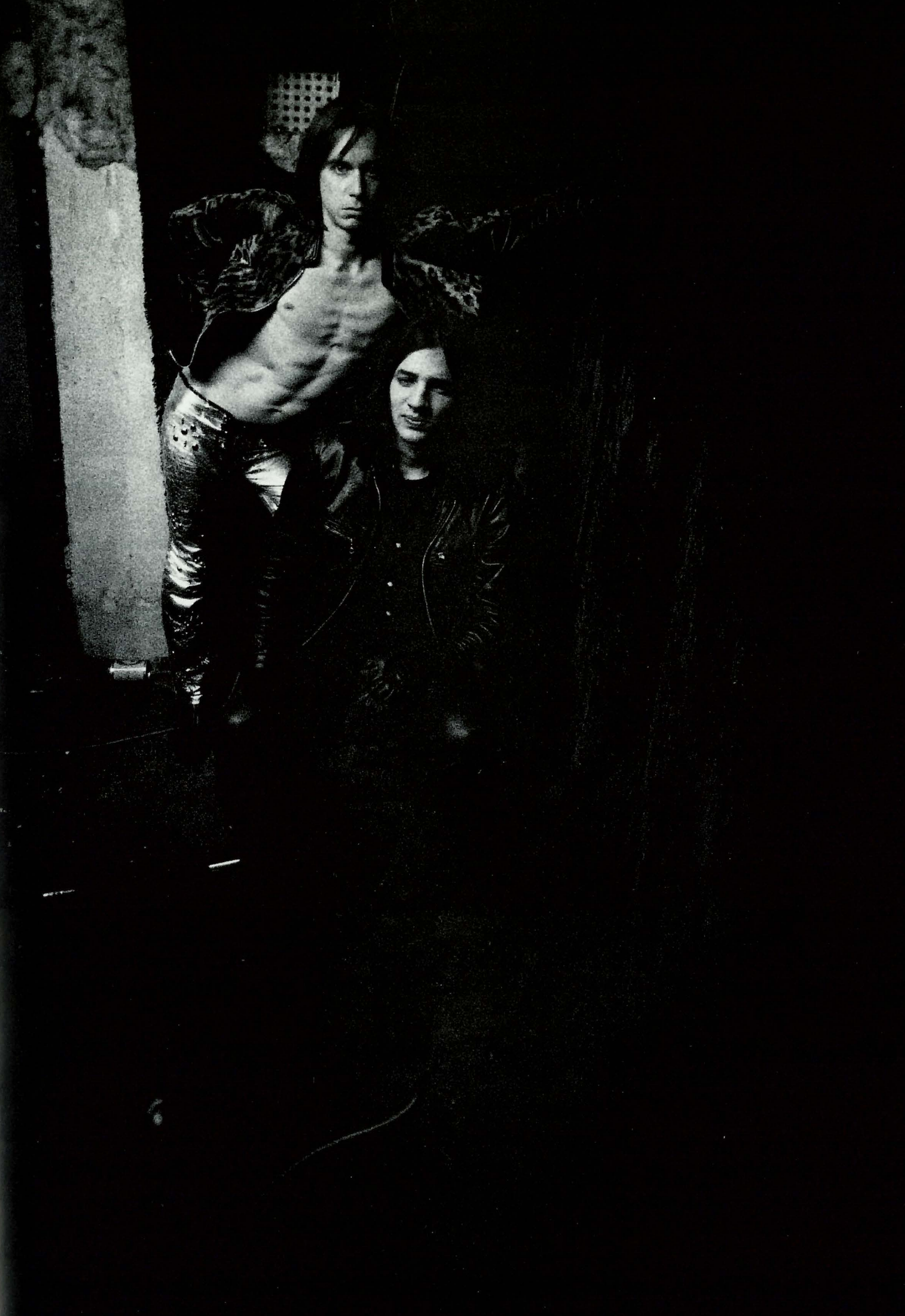

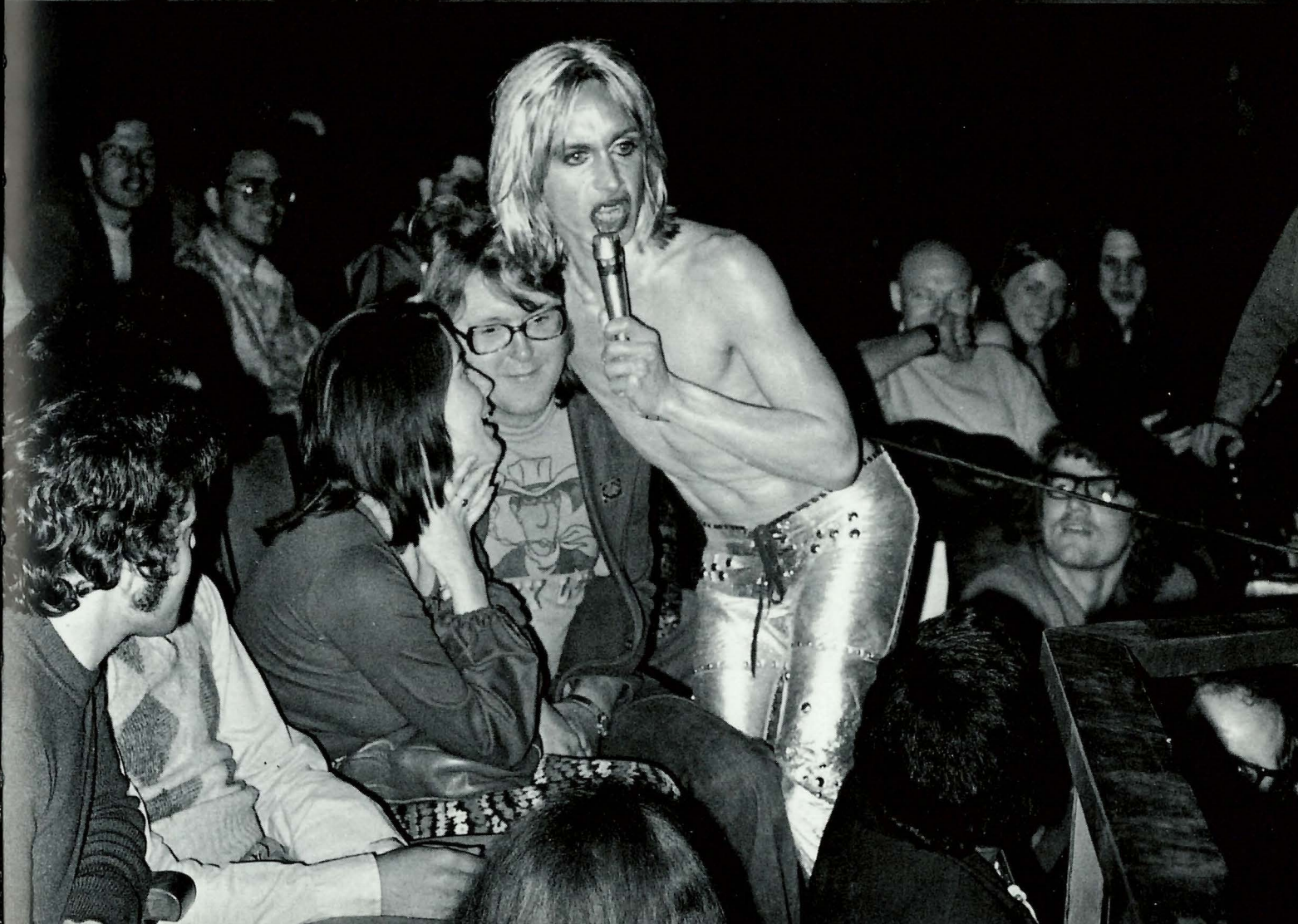

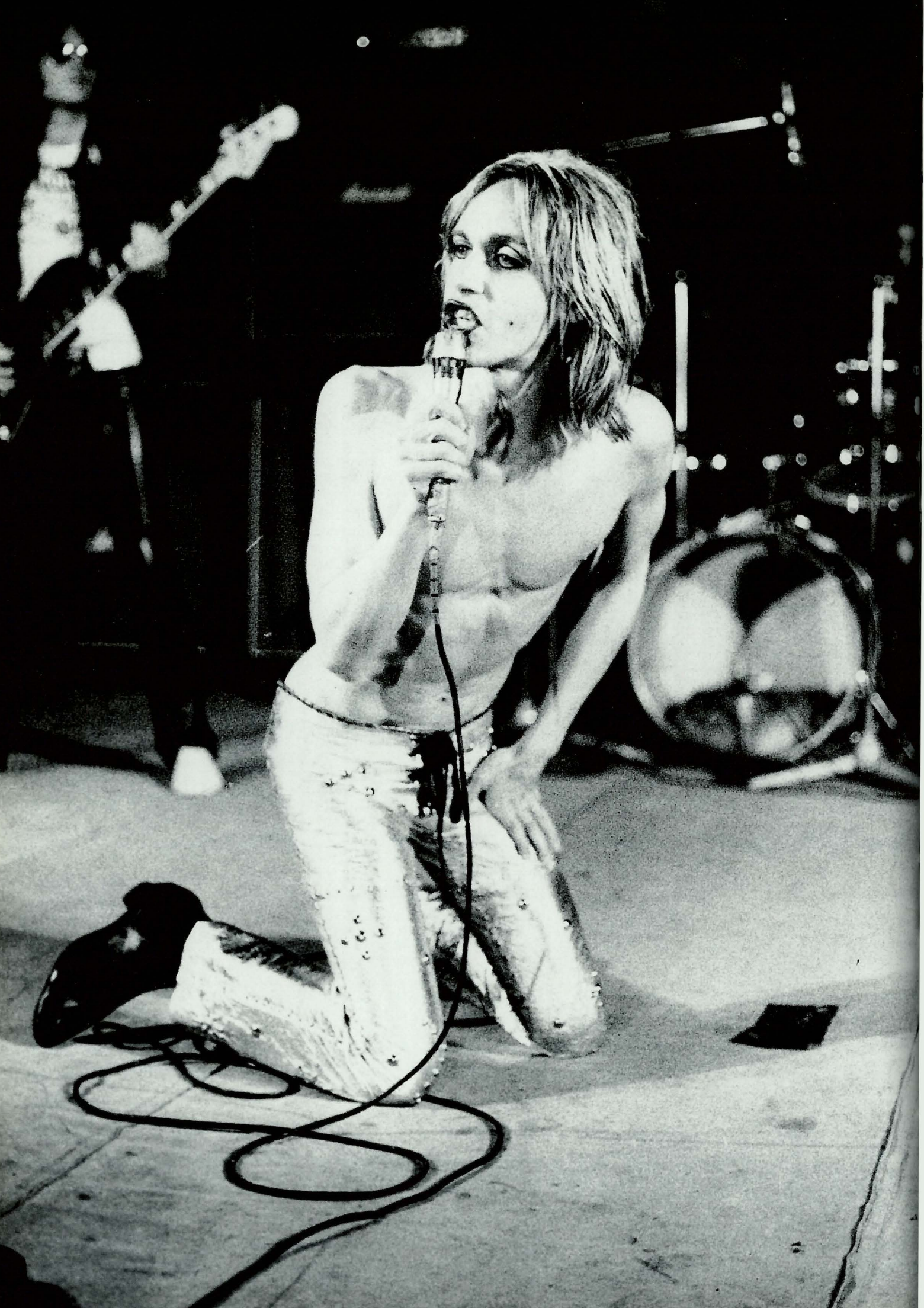

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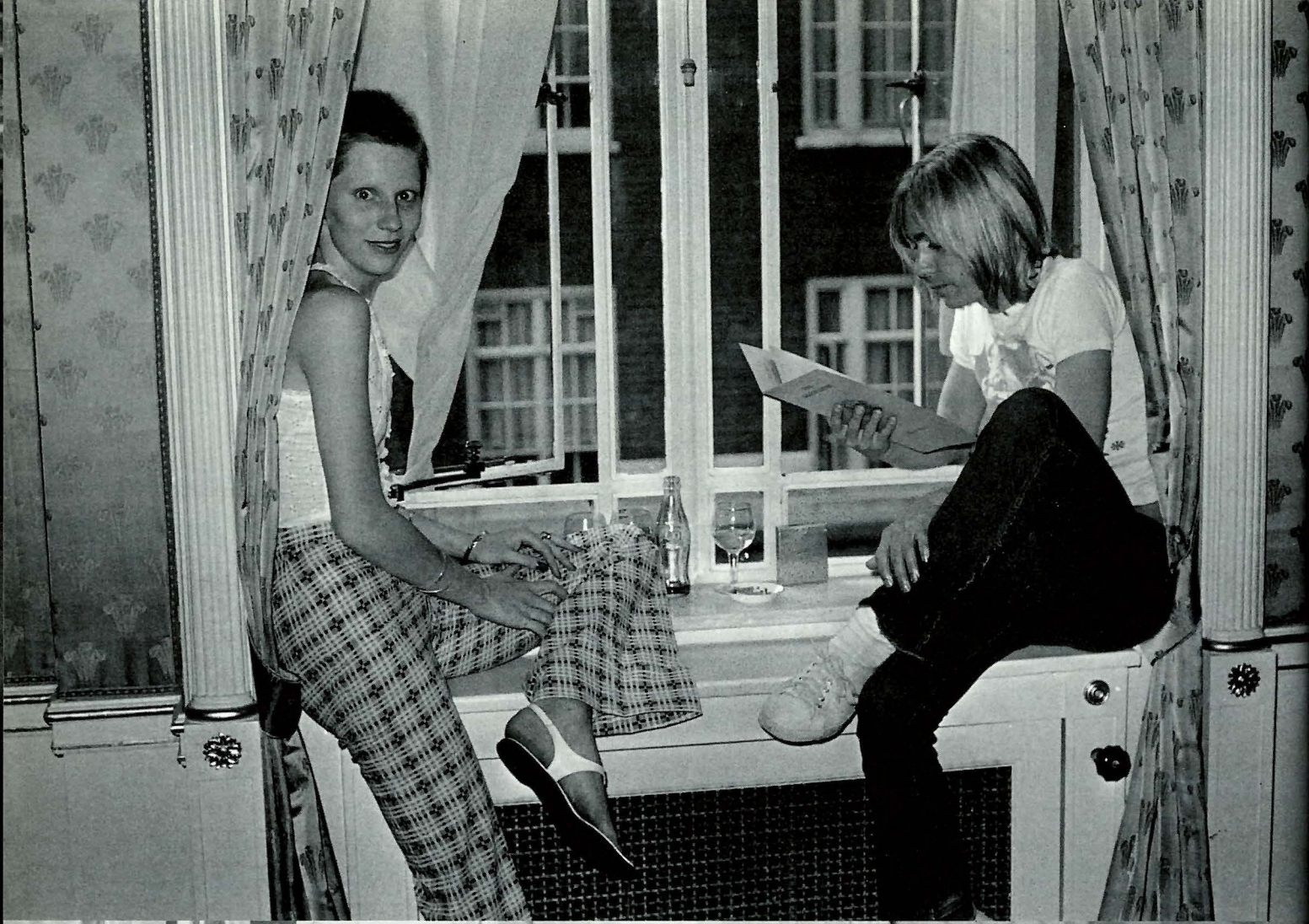

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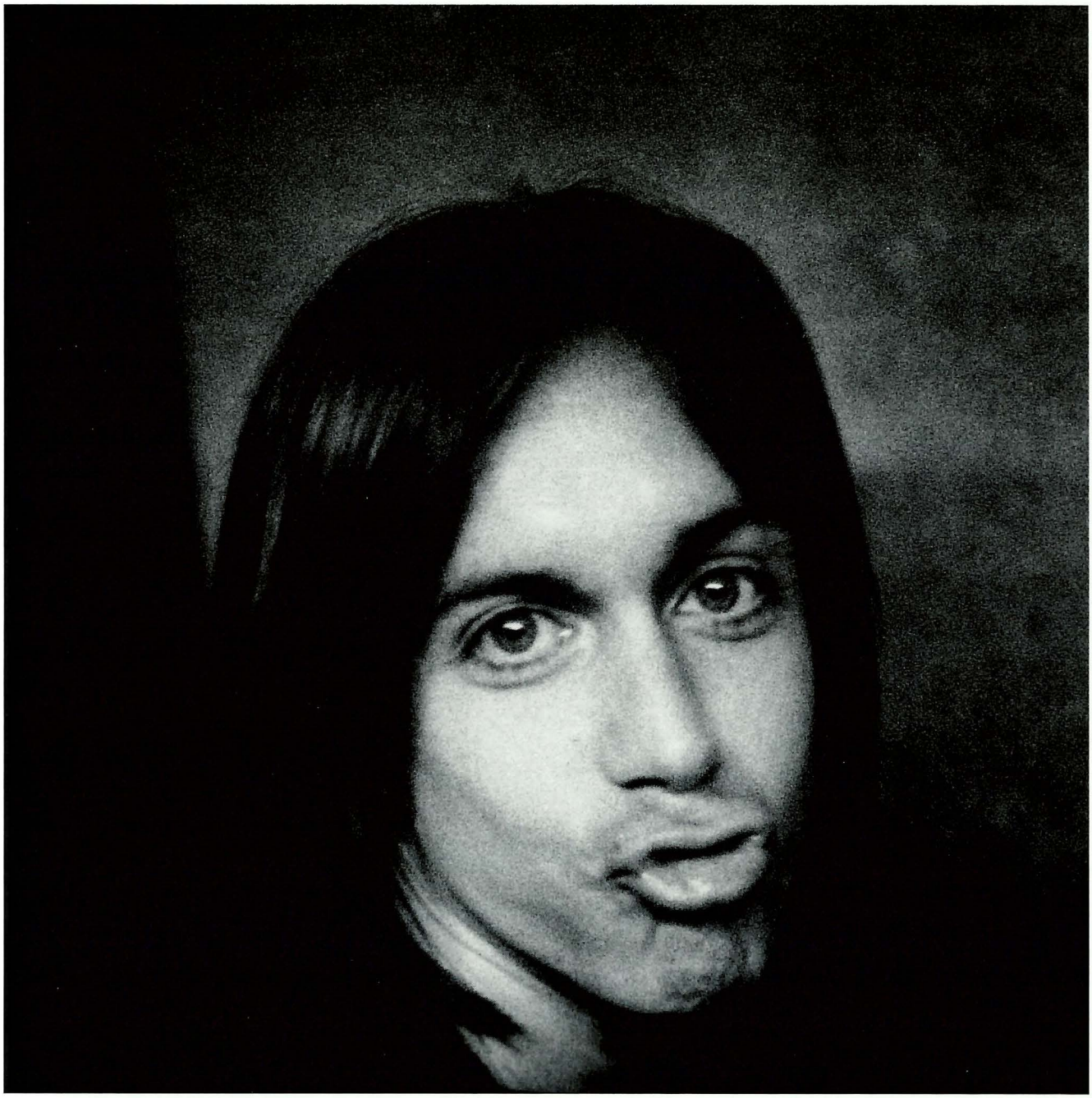

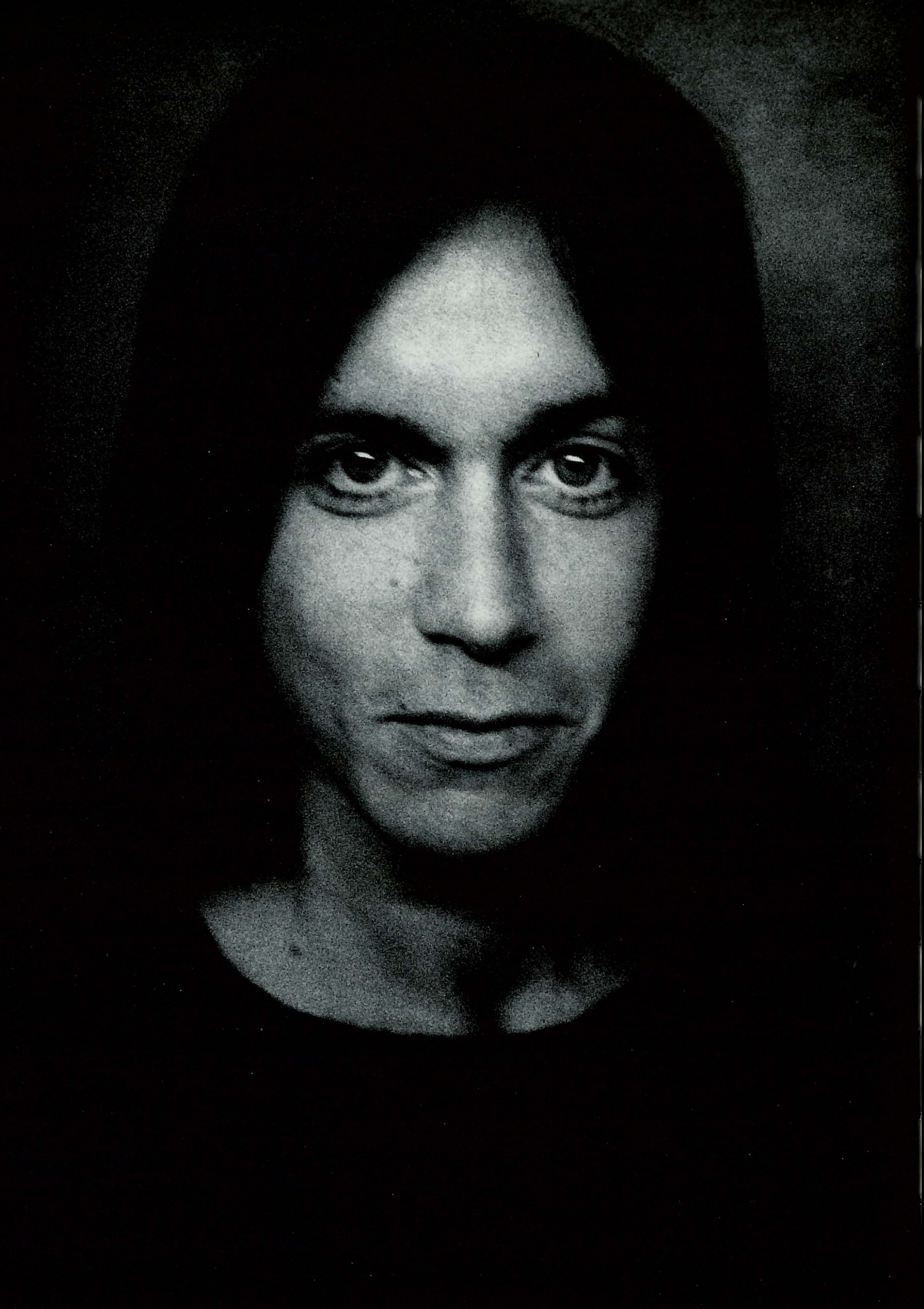

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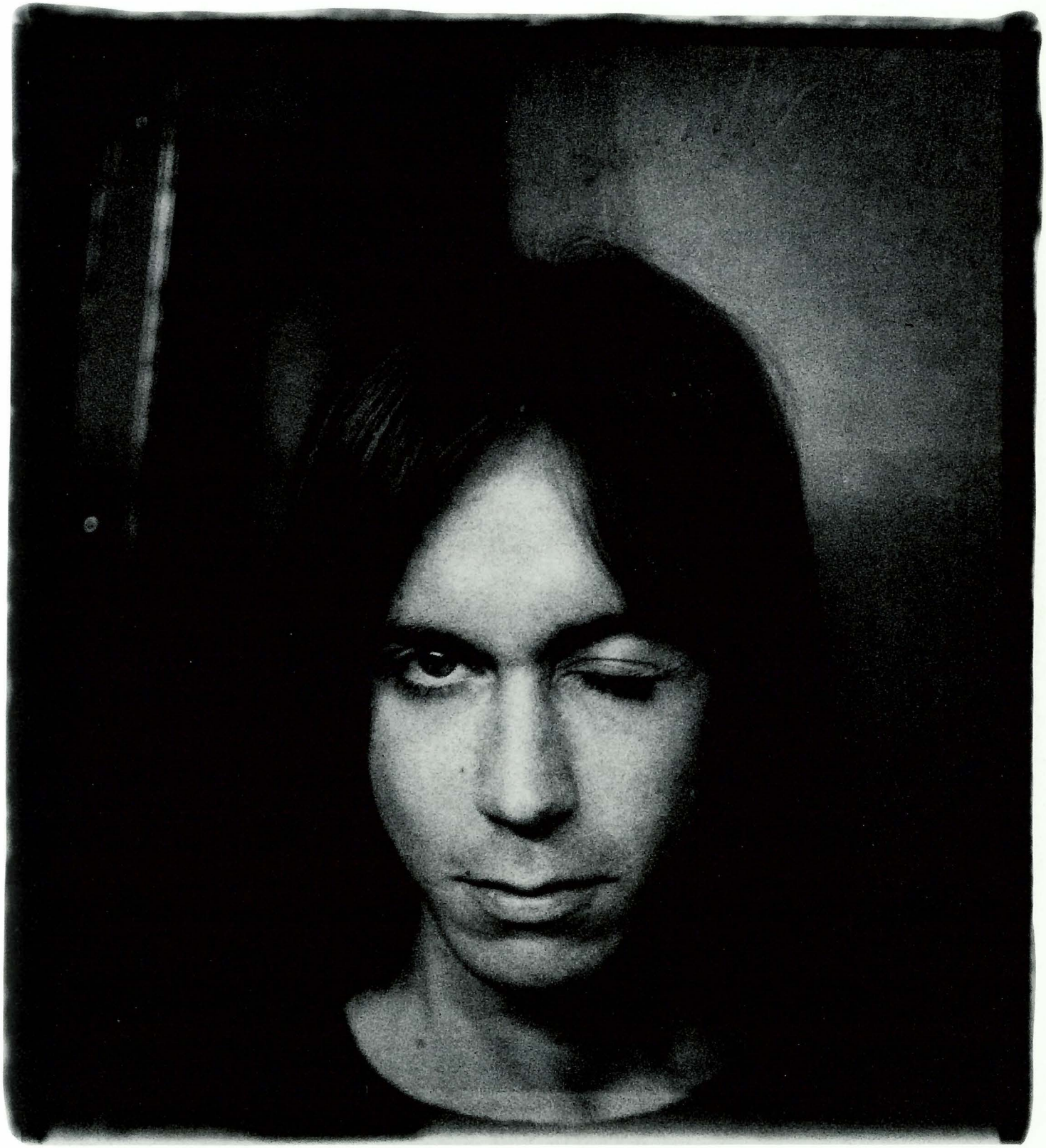

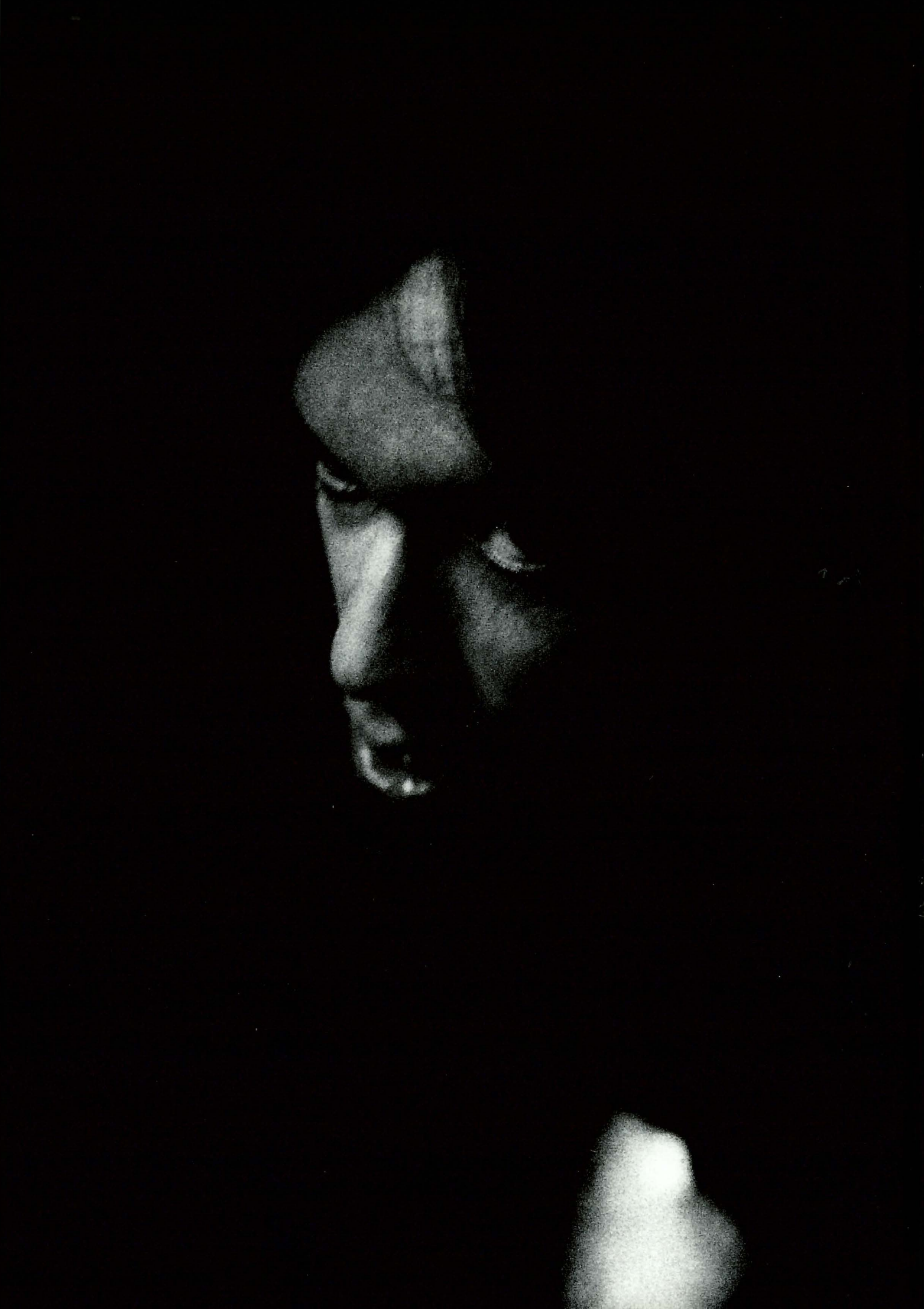

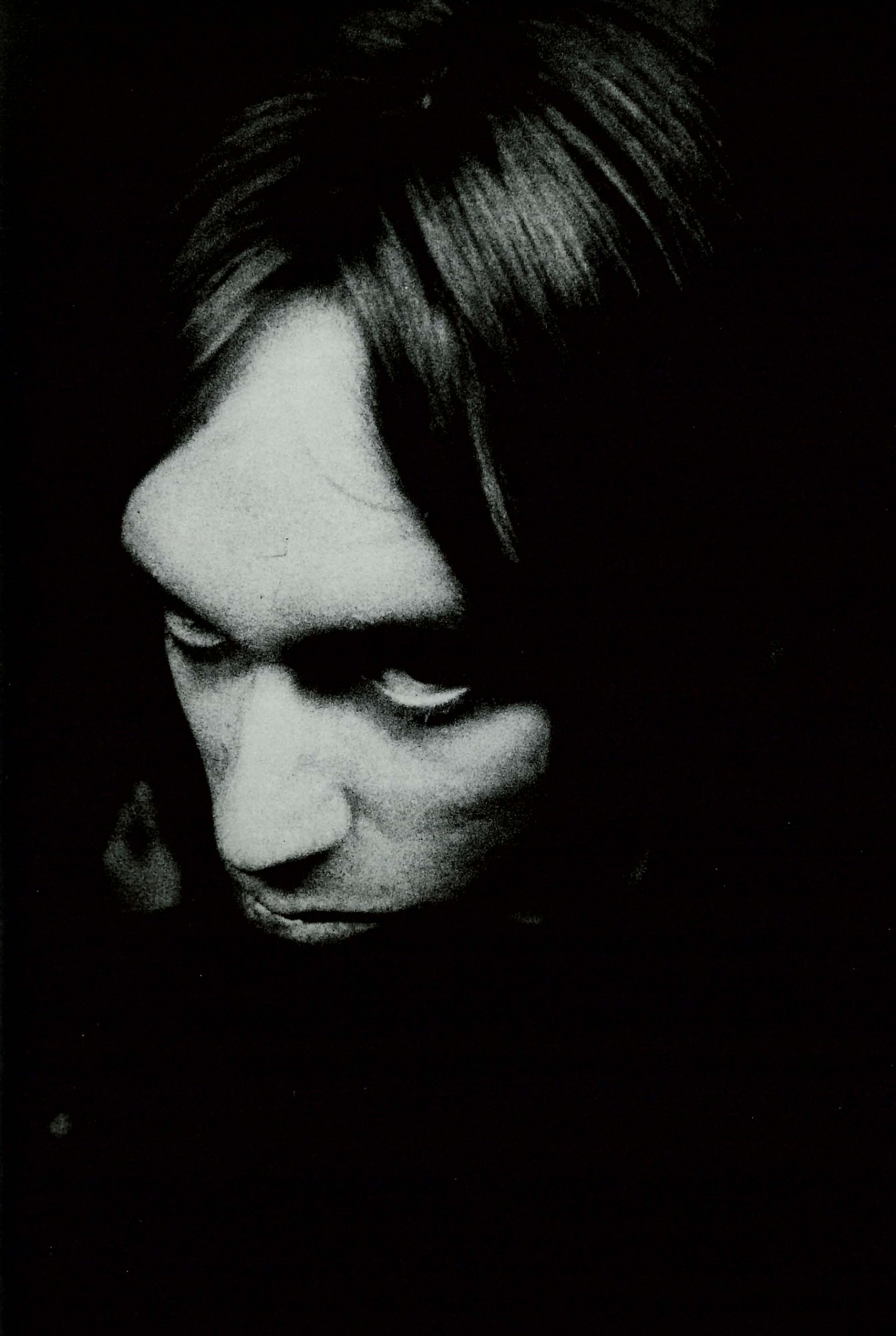

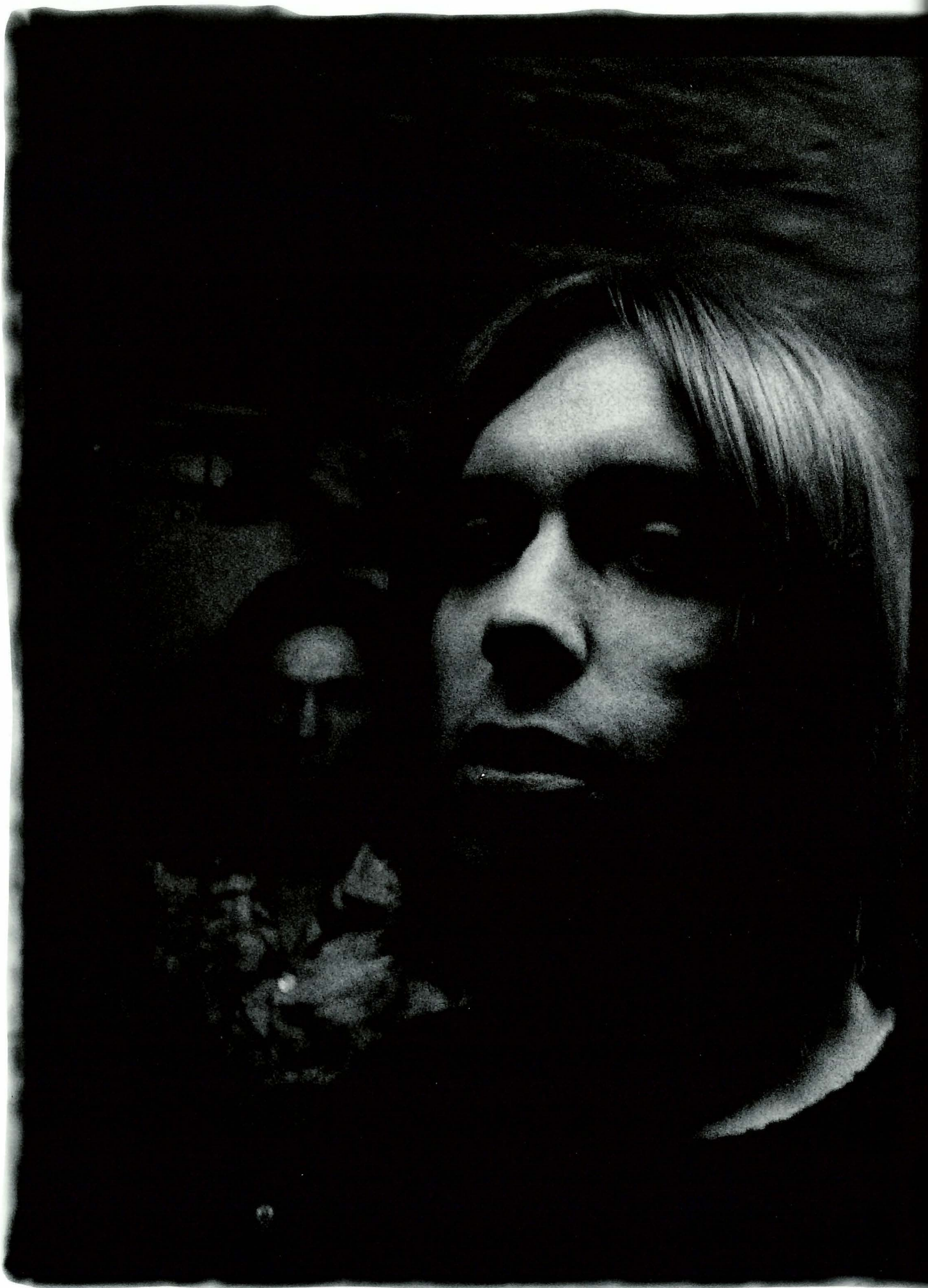

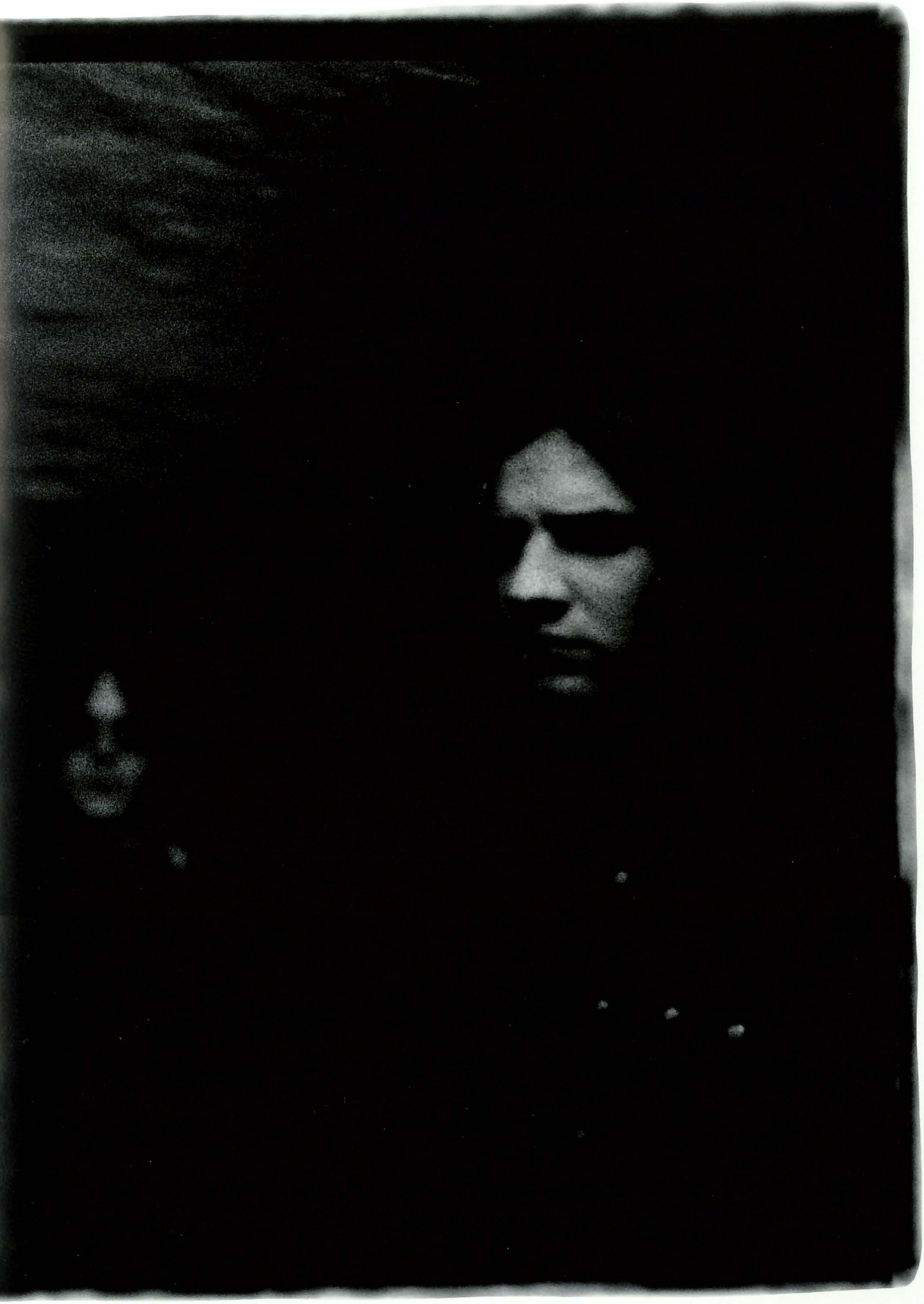

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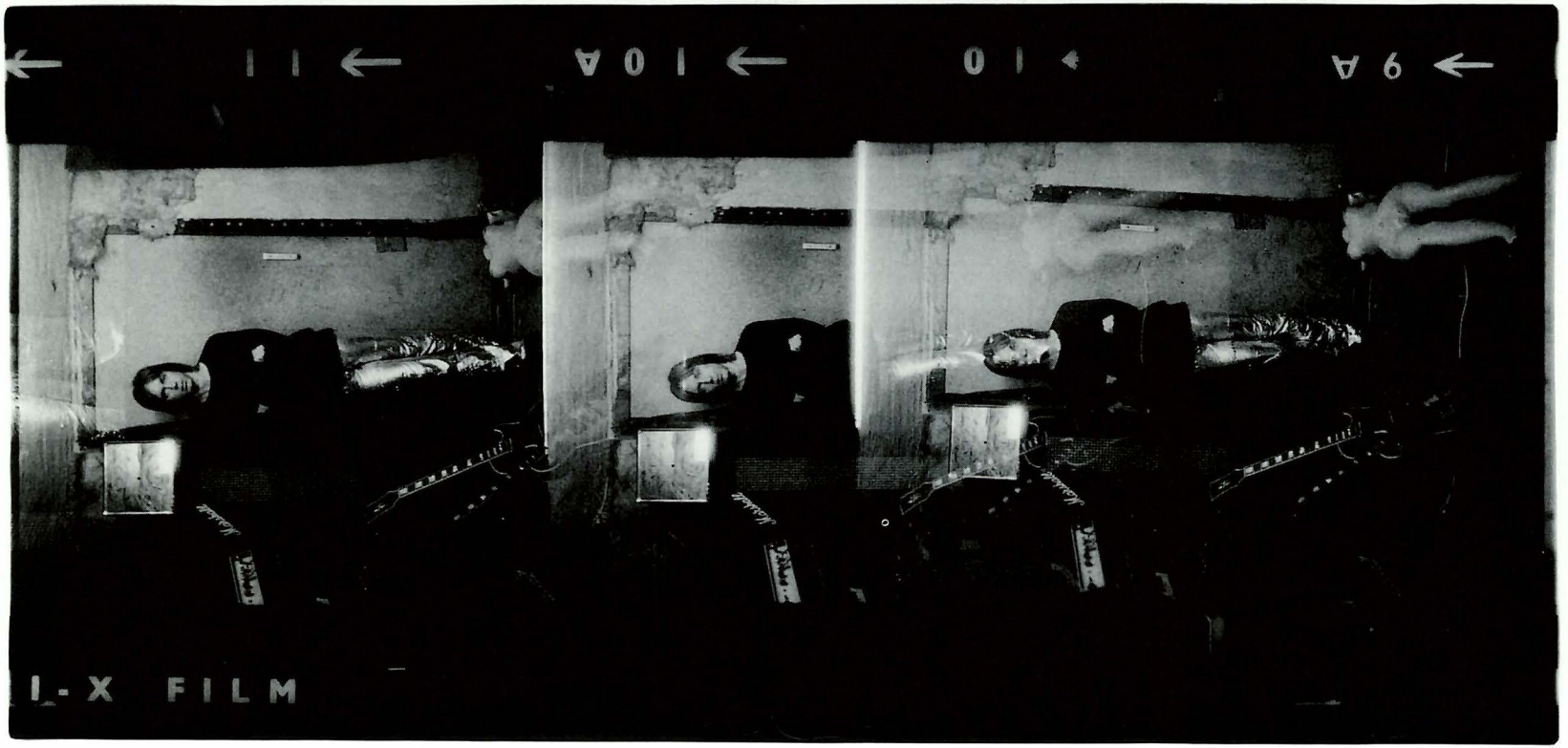
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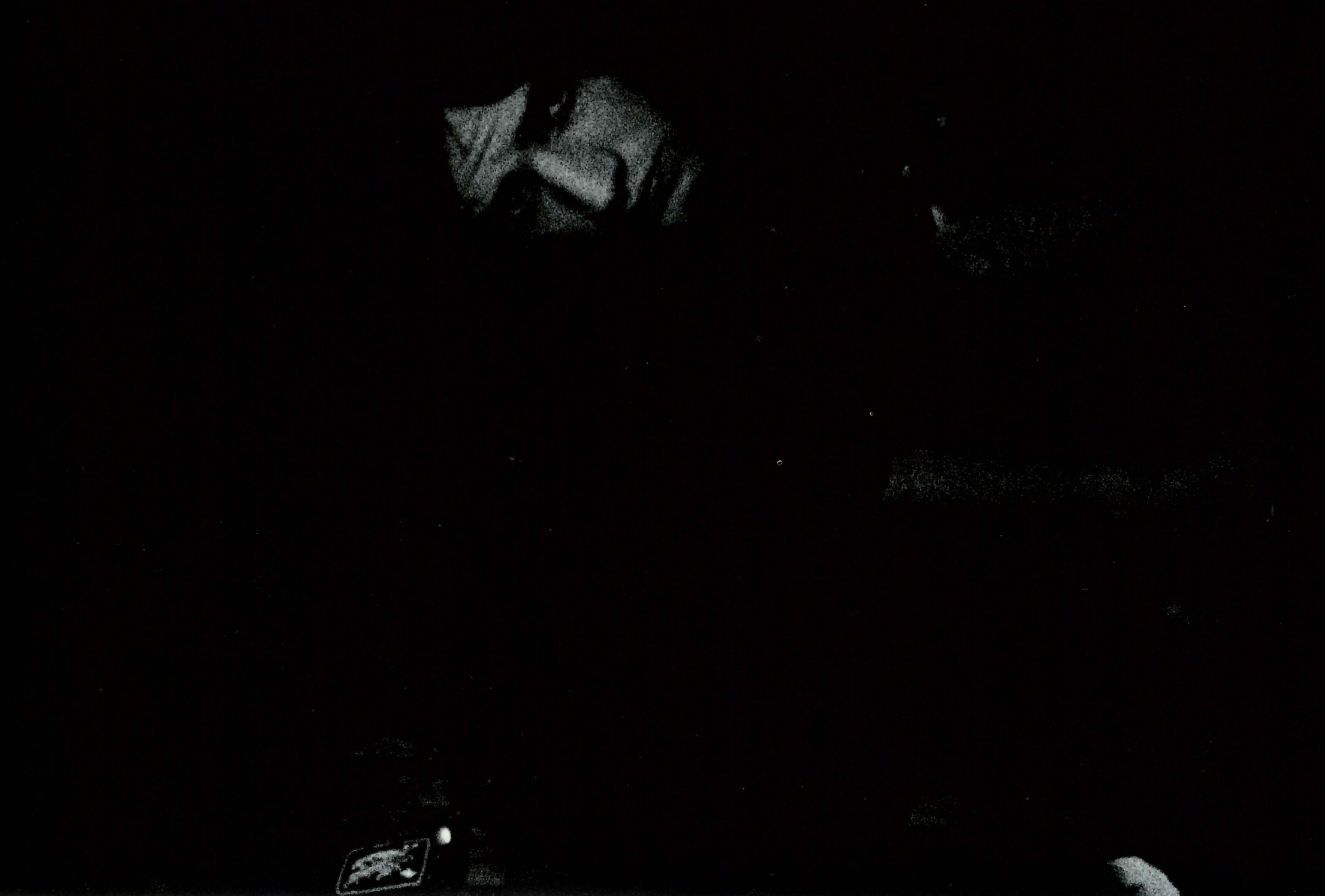

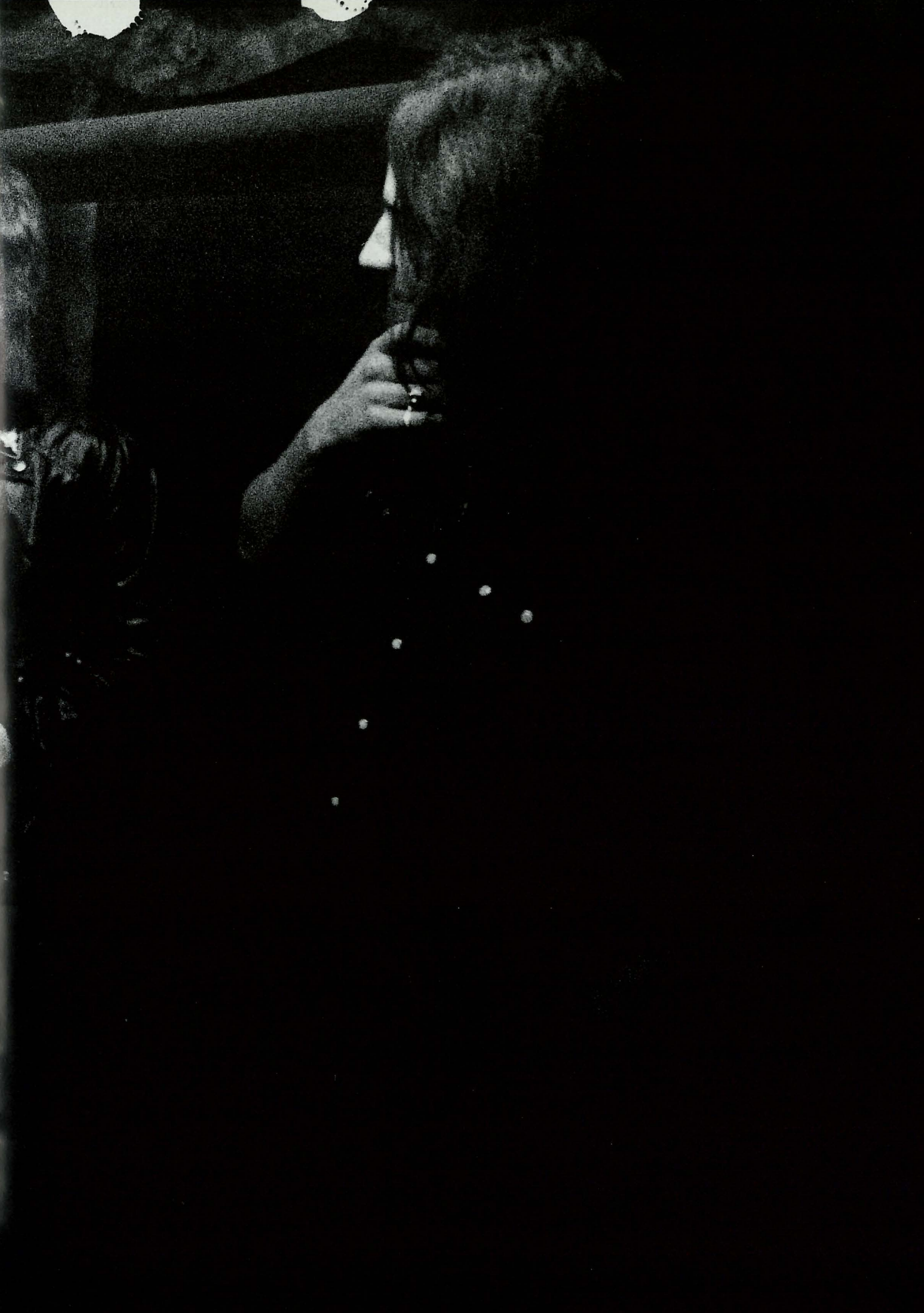

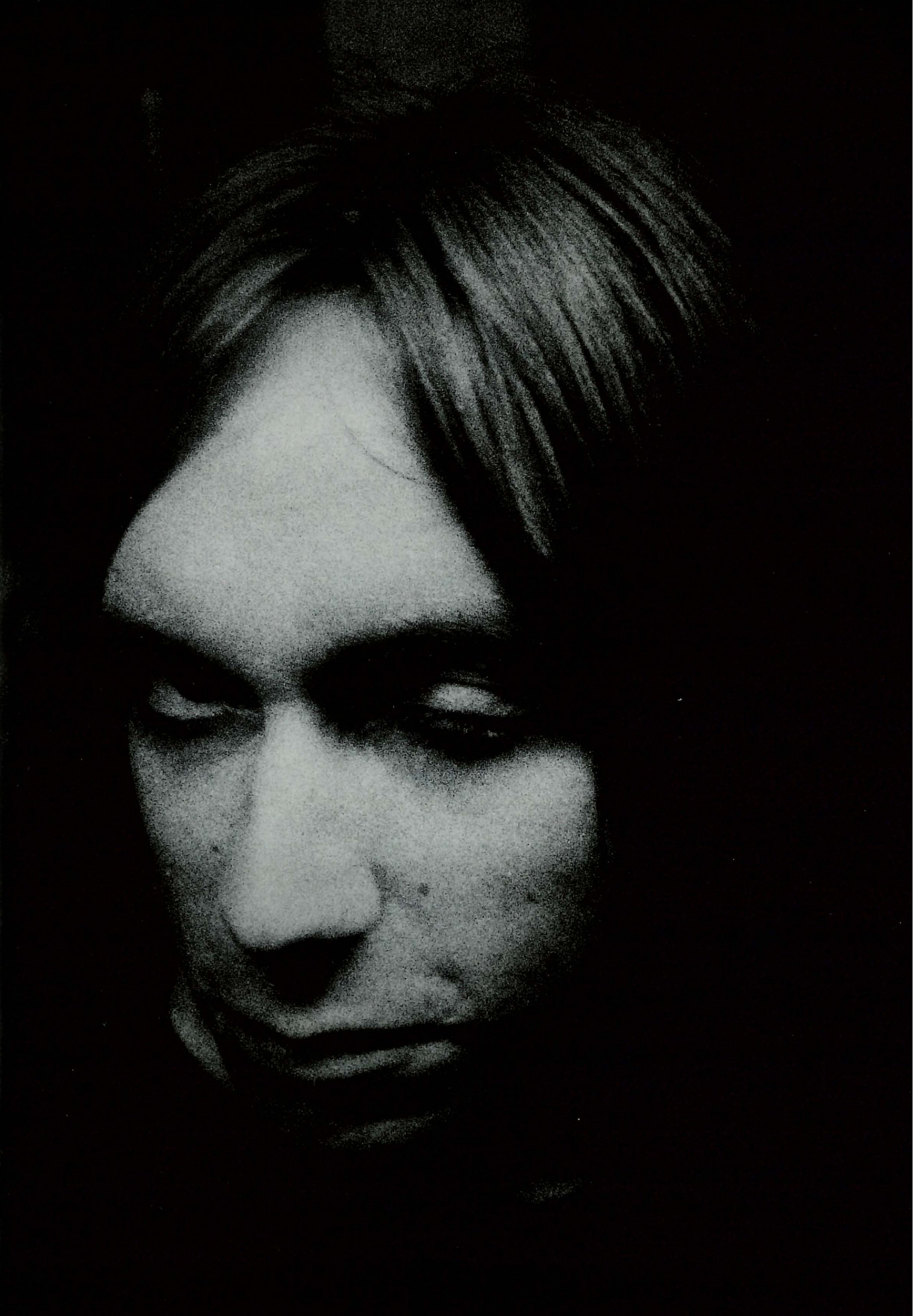

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Containing around 200 amazing photographs – most previously unpublished, and including 24 pages of full colour – as well as interviews conducted between Mick Rock and Iggy Pop in 1972, **Raw Power** is an unparalleled document of Iggy at the height of both his musical powers and his legendary excesses. **Raw Power** also serves as a unique visual diary of the Williamson-period Stooges, and of the heady times which produced one of rock music's enduring recordings, whose famous cover shot is now indelibly established in modern pop iconography.

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